

THE CLASSICAL JOURNAL

PUBLISHED BY THE CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION OF THE
MIDDLE WEST AND SOUTH WITH THE COOPERATION
OF THE CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW ENGLAND
AND THE CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC STATES

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Number 1

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THE CLASSICAL JOURNAL

VOLUME XXVI

OCTOBER, 1930

NUMBER 1

Editorial

PUBLIO VERGILIO MARONI
DULCI DECORI TERRAE ITALIAE
MUSIS HOMERICIS POETAE DILECTISSIMO
MEMORIAQUE AETERNA IN ANIMIS HOMINUM
VATI PACIS UNIVERSAE
DIE NATALI BIS MILLESIMO HOC TESTIMONIUM
PIETATISQUE AC CARITATIS
POPULUS AMERICANUS DEDIT DEDICAVITQUE
ID OCT MCMXXX A D

NOTE. — This contribution, written by M. H. Griffin of the University of North Carolina, was awarded the prize authorized by the Classical Association of the Middle West and South for "the best tribute to Vergil composed in Latin in a form suitable for a commemorative tablet"; cf. the CLASSICAL JOURNAL XXIII (1928), 643. It is employed here as a dedication for this special Vergil number of the JOURNAL.

GENIO NATALI P. VERGILI MARONIS
AD BIMILLENNIUM EIUS CELEBRANDUM

*Mantua me genuit, Calabri rapuere, tenet nunc
Parthenope; cecini pascua, rura, duces.*

Haec pro titulo de te antiquitus scripta sunt. Mantua quidem te genuit; Mediolanum autem te recepit docuitque; Roma Hellasque erudiverunt; deinde Italia te suum ipsius habuit; postremo Brundisi mortuus es, Neapolisque tua ossa tenuit. Sed non omnis Brundisi mortuus es, nam melior pars in aevum perduravit. Etiam nunc vivus per ora virum volitas, ut tu ipse quondam dixisti. Nec urbs, nec patria, nec Europa quidem tota satis magna umquam fuit quae te teneret. Omnium urbium, omnium terrarum, nempe omnium aetatum es.

Cantor eras pascuorum segetumque ducumque; pacis autem fautor, inimicus belli caedisque, quem afflictorum misereret, qui lacrimas rerum humanarum semper haberes, et spem sempiternam inter mala malosque auream iustitiae pacisque aetatem iterum redituram foveres.

Deinde per illa saecula caeca, cum litterae omnes non longe abessent quin in oblivionem deprimerentur, etiam tunc nomen famaue tua non omnino obruta sunt. Cum autem denique doctrina classica renata rediret, cumque gentes ex socordia diuturna ignorantiaque sese exsuscitarent, inter tot illustres antiquos tuum erat nomen quod clarissime effulgebat.

Nunc tandem, in hac Hesperia republica nostra, longe ultra ultimam Thulen tuam, quam, nisi in somniis terrae melioris, numquam noveras, tu ipse tamen per amplius ducentos annos notissimus es. Nostri iuvenes te legunt, intelligunt, colunt. Tua studia, tuae spes nostrae quoque sunt.

Quas omnes ob causas, praesertim hanc ultimam, te nos Americani salutamus, te celebramus, te nostrum ipsorum poetam vindicamus.

NOTE. — At the request of the editors-in-chief this tribute was composed by Frank J. Miller, former editor of the CLASSICAL JOURNAL, as an editorial for this Vergil number.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT VERGIL?

By TENNEY FRANK
Johns Hopkins University

Vergil's biographers are wont to draw their data (1) from the poet's own statements, (2) from a few casual references made by men who knew him, (3) from the *Vitae Vergilianae* written in the fourth century and later, and (4) from late scholia.

From the first source we learn but little of definite biographical nature, since the *Georgics* and *Aeneid* are written in genres that almost completely exclude personal references, since the *Bucolics* are so steeped in a pastoral convention that one can hardly decide where experience ends and fancy begins, and since the poems of the *Appendix* are by many scholars considered to be of doubtful authenticity. What we may accept without hesitation from these sources is that Mantua was his native city, that the sufferings of his fellow citizens during the military evictions caused him deep anguish, that he knew Asinius Pollio, Cornelius Gallus, Quintilius Varus, and other young literary men when he wrote the *Bucolics*, and that he lived at Naples while writing the *Georgics*.

We may also draw many valid inferences regarding the author from his own books. They leave no doubt whatever that he was unusually well-read in Homer, Greek tragedy, Greek philosophy, in Hellenistic poets like Apollonius and Theocritus, in Roman writers from Naevius and Ennius down to Catullus and Lucretius of his own youth, that he read deeply in Roman history, that he had seen much of Italy and had observed with understanding, that he was sensitive to beauty in sound, form, and color, and to all the charms of Italy's quiet loveliness, that he had a competence that gave him leisure to enjoy all these things as well as to live the life of a poet, and that he had the wisdom

to appreciate the excellences of the Augustan régime. Indeed it is from the unobtrusive communication of his very impersonal poetry that one really learns all that is worth knowing about him. But that is not the theme on which I have been asked to write.

Of the men who knew Vergil, Horace and Propertius give us a few facts. From Horace we know that it was Vergil who introduced Horace to Maecenas, that before 38 B.C. he was intimate with Maecenas, as well as with Varius Rufus, Plotius, and Horace himself, and that at this time also he was a resident of Naples, since he joined Maecenas' party at Sinuessa. From Horace, too, we hear of Vergil's ill health and of that *anima candida* which is apparent in all his poetry. Propertius, writing about 26 B.C., reveals the fact that by this date Vergil had established his fame and that the *Aeneid*, which was then on the stocks, was expected to find a place by the side of Homer's *Iliad*. These few explicit statements of course are sadly scant, but at least they help us to place the poet in his *milieu*; and to the biographer that leads far. A poet who sings of the fields of his native land and who writes the epic of his people draws perforce in part from his environment; and when that is pointed out to us it is our task to reconstruct the details of it. For that reconstruction we can draw upon the later letters, essays, and orations of Cicero, upon the archaeology of the Augustan age, the poetry of the vanishing Neoterics, of Lucretius, Horace, Tibullus, and Propertius, and upon the histories of Suetonius, Appian, and Dio. In a very real sense these give us much to learn about Vergil. But here again I am entering a field that lies outside the limits of my assignment.

What else do we know about Vergil? Nothing that has not at some time been questioned. What of the "Lives" of Vergil? We have several brief ones, but they are late and far from reliable. The fullest one is usually attributed to Donatus, the teacher of Servius, and is sometimes assumed to be taken from Suetonius; but we are now very skeptical about both assumptions. This "*Vita Donatiana*" is in fact found to be anonymous in the good manuscripts of the ninth and tenth centuries and does not

receive that attribution till the twelfth century. So late an attribution is not worth much. We do not doubt that it rests in part on the *Life* that Donatus had in the Preface of his commentary, but we cannot now tell how close a copy it is. Apart from the anonymity one very suspicious fact is that it contains certain statements which disagree with very definite ones that Saint Jerome and Philargyrius both drew from Suetonius. Here therefore we are on uncertain ground. And we must attempt to trace the descent of these "Lives" before we proceed to estimate their worth.

Apparently no "Life of Vergil" was written before Suetonius, more than a century after Vergil's death. This is clear from the fact that the Suetonian *Life* had to be constructed out of casual statements gathered from a lot of unlikely authorities: Eros, Hyginus, Asconius, Julius Modestus, and Melissus. Quintilian indeed quotes Varius Rufus, Vergil's executor, regarding Vergil's deliberate method of composition, but that remark must have been made by Varius simply to justify his own method of editing the poet's manuscript. If Varius had written a real biography we should have heard about it. The first biography of Vergil, then, was the one written by Suetonius; and it probably was a very brief one, like that of Terence, which has survived under Suetonius' name. This biography was lost, but not before it was excerpted by St. Jerome, Servius, Donatus, and others. What is plausible in the "*Vita Donatiana*" probably came from this source, but it was not worth much. Suetonius' sources were not full nor very reliable. Vergil had lived a retired life, and few had mentioned him in their writings. The trifling items drawn from casual remarks of Eros, Melissus, and the like are rather insignificant and obviously lie in the shadow of unfocused memories, as casual remarks usually do. Secondly, Suetonius was a careless and hasty writer. Historians do not place much reliance upon any of his statements. Thirdly, Suetonius was gullible and very fond of salacious gossip. The items in the "Lives" regarding the miraculous poplar tree, Alexis, and the facile Plotia Hieria, unusually blessed with two family names, may well come from

Suetonius; but that fact does not make them plausible. When such things occur in Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars* we do not necessarily accept them.

After Suetonius, no one seems to have written a life of Vergil until Donatus inserted one in his voluminous commentary. Donatus may possibly have used Suetonius' *Life* of Vergil without alteration as he did the *Life* of Terence, but the probabilities are that he reworked the material of his source as he usually did. Attempts have been made to show what phrases in the extant "*Vita Donatiana*" (which apparently was based upon Donatus) are Suetonian and which are not.¹ Such attempts fail to be of service to criticism both because Donatus often transmits borrowed material faithfully in his own phrasing and because we have so small a fraction left of Suetonius' belletristic and critical writings that we know very little about the vocabulary and style that he employed in such writings. Hence even if we had the original Donatus, we should not be sure what part was excerpted from Suetonius and what he had added. Donatus had very serious limitations. He was, to be sure, a diligent grammarian, but his literary and historical comments show that he seldom comprehended the spirit of classical times. He lived after the civil wars and the cultural debacle of the third century, when Roman civilization had temporarily broken down. During the crash most private libraries disappeared. For a long time after it very few men read books, no one wrote books, and barbarian soldiers occupied the ancient palaces as well as the senate-house. By dint of hard labor Donatus could recover some knowledge of correct grammar and of the old rules for quantities which were no longer generally observed; he could also explain much of the classical vocabulary, but not even he could recover for himself the spirit of old Rome. His egregious errors when he spoke in his commentaries of old Roman institutions, his childish comments on bucolic poetry, and the allegorical claptrap he employed in his attempt to interpret the *Eclogues* show that the pall of mediaeval superstition had already descended upon Rome during those fifty

¹ For example by R. M. Geer, *Trans. Am. Phil. Assoc.* LVII (1926), 107-15.

years of anarchy that blotted out the earlier culture. Whatever Donatus may have added to Suetonius' *Life* of Vergil could hardly have improved it.

But that is not the only cause of uncertainty, for the "Donatus *Vita*" has not survived intact. The earlier manuscripts of the *Vita* (B, P, G, and A) do not even bear Donatus' name. It is only in two garbled copies (C and K) of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries — when the name of Donatus was ubiquitous — that the grammarian's name appears. And the probabilities are that this *Vita* — though apparently descending somehow from Donatus — depends in the form we have it upon Philargyrius' more or less faithful adaptation of Donatus.² It is doubtless the best representative that we have of the Suetonian tradition — though that is not saying much.

The other *Vitae* ("Probus," "Philargyrius," "Focas") also seem to go back to Suetonius, even if they are more garbled and less directly descended; and as they seem to be independent of the "Donatus *Vita*," any of them may contain authentic material. But here, too, we have no sure criterion by which to decide what parts may or may not reflect Suetonius. The short *Vita* found in the Introduction of Servius is probably made up of brief excerpts from the real Donatus with slight changes. The four brief references to Vergil found in St. Jerome doubtless came from Suetonius, who was usually his source for material of this sort. They ought therefore to be closer to Suetonius than statements found in the *Vitae* which hark back to the lost Donatus. However, we must remember that St. Jerome had to condense his items mercilessly to get them into the brief space which he allowed himself and also that his chronology is exceedingly reckless — a fact which is now usually explained on the assumption that he first jotted his items down on the margin of a copy of Eusebius and inserted them later, when he no longer remembered precisely where they belonged.

² Cf. Klotz, *Rhein. Mus.* LXVI (1912), 306-09. It is noticeable that our "Philargyrius" (itself an abstract of the lost Philargyrius) is closer to the phrasing that St. Jerome found in Suetonius than the "*Vita Donatiana*" is; cf. Helm, *Philologus, Supplementband* XXI (1929), 43. But we must not make the mistake of placing any reliance on St. Jerome's dates.

What then shall we do with the material contained in all these *Vitae*? The only reasonable method seems to me to be this: We must reject (1) the miraculous stories which generally came into the *Vitae* from late legends, (2) the material that is connected with an allegorical interpretation of the *Eclogues*, (3) the inconsistent stories about the land commissions, the evictions, and the recovery of the farm, which are demonstrably based upon a miscomprehension of history, and (4) the salacious bits that are traceable to Suetonius' propensities for gossip. The rest of the "Donatus *Vita*" and various reasonable statements in the other *Vitae* may be accepted as *probable*.

Out of these "Lives" I am inclined to accept as Suetonian the date and place of Vergil's birth, the names of his parents, the statements regarding his education at Cremona and Milan, and his residence at Naples (with visits to Rome), the list of his early poetic works (the *Appendix*), the statement that his father lost his property *after Philippi*, the references to the periods of composition of the various works, to his method of composition, to his personal appearance and his ill health, to a half brother, Proculus (but one need not believe the added remark of "Probus" that Proculus was the younger of the two), to the poet's death at Brundisium in 19 B.C., to the will, the burial at Naples, and to Augustus' disposal of the manuscript of the *Aeneid*, and a few other items of minor importance. But this of course is not much. There is hardly one illuminating remark in these "Lives" about the poet's character, certainly not a single penetrating piece of criticism or of literary evaluation in all this concern about trifling details. That even scholiasts could be satisfied with such lifeless biography after reading the *Aeneid* is all but incomprehensible. The biographer who disregards the *Vitae* and seeks the vital facts in the poet's own work has not lost much of value. That a poet like Vergil should have had to leave his life-story to men like Suetonius and Donatus to transmit is one of the great tragedies in the history of literature.

In this estimate of data we have so far neglected the scholia, which contain a large number of references to Vergil. Unfor-

tunately these scholia are drawn from a wide range of reading and conjecturing and do not, like the *Vitae*, go back ultimately to one preponderating source like Suetonius. Each statement must stand or fall on its own merits. Most of them have to do with the identification of the characters (Tityrus, Menalcas, etc.) and with the subject matter of the *Eclogues*. Most of them are at once suspect because they so obviously were invented in the allegorizing period of the fourth century or later and betray a hopeless ignorance of Augustan history. Writers who confuse the conditions prevailing after Mutina, Philippi, and Actium respectively, or who represent Asinius Pollio as intervening with Octavian on behalf of Vergil at the time when Pollio was leading an army against Octavian, can hardly be trusted to give the historical background of those *Eclogues*. One is safer if one completely ignores these scholiastic guesses than if one accepts them. However, if one sifts with great caution one may find some reasonable data here too. When the Servian scholium on *Eclogue* ix, 10 quotes verbatim from an oration of Cornelius (Gallus?) against Alfenus (Varus) which rebukes the latter for confiscating too much of Mantuan territory, we have not a guess but a fragment of a contemporaneous document. The reference to Octavius Musa in the same scholium could hardly have been a late invention, since his name does not occur in the *Eclogues*; and when Servius, in his scholium on *Aeneid* vi, 264 and *Eclogue* vi, 13, refers to the forgotten Siro as Vergil's teacher, he could hardly be guessing. But such genuine fragments of old lore are rare in these scholia. Most of the references are reconstructions built about names that occur in the *Eclogues*; and besides being inconsistent, they assume the kind of servile kowtowing on the poet's part that foreign schoolteachers of Servius' day were accustomed to. That whole lumber must be jettisoned, and with no regrets.

We have finally the question of the data that are to be drawn from the *Appendix Vergiliana*. It is generally agreed that the list of these poems which occurs *independently* in the "*Vita Donatiana*" and in Servius comes from Suetonius, since the contem-

poraries of Suetonius refer to some of these poems as being Vergil's. It is not reasonable to use *any* of Suetonius' data if we reject the list of poems that Suetonius and his contemporaries accepted. If this list goes, the whole *Vita* should go with it. The manuscripts of the *Appendix* bore Vergil's name in the Carolingian period, which convinces the palaeographer that the manuscripts of the fourth century also bore his name. Lucan, Statius, and Martial referred to the *Culex* as Vergil's, and Quintilian assigned the second *Catalepton* to the poet, which brings at least a part of the collection, under Vergil's name, into the period of the illumination not far from Vergil's day. Finally, it is now generally agreed that the literary forms, the language, and meter best accord with the literary customs of the period of Vergil's youth. And I have tried elsewhere to indicate that the contents also fit well into the conditions and events that history records for the period between 49 and 40 B.C. Now this is of course not a complete proof of the authenticity of these poems, but it seems to me to go so far in that direction that the burden of proof lies with those who still refuse to accept them.

If we accept them as *probably* Vergilian we must also utilize them for our collection of *probable* items in a biography for which, except in the case of a few contemporaneous statements, we have, strictly speaking, only probabilities. In the *Culex* we may observe a very young beginner not very successfully struggling with an uncongenial Neoteric form; the fifth *Catalepton* reveals him breaking impatiently away from rhetoric to find comfort in philosophic studies with Siro at Naples; the *Ciris* shows much progress in Alexandrian art, some study of Catullus, and a deep respect for philosophy. Other of the *Catalepton* reveal still further the early influence of Catullus and Philodemus and an interest in the classical doctrine of Varius. Then come some political references, in which there is evident a friendliness toward Octavian and a deep aversion for followers of Antony. In the eighth *Catalepton* we find the author in possession of Siro's villa and there ready to greet his father, who has heard the news that his property is to be expropriated. The ninth acknowledges

— no doubt too generously — a literary debt to some pastoral studies of Messalla, and the *Dirae* reveal the poet's disgust with the Civil War and its ambitious leaders, who through personal ambition do not hesitate to drive honest farmers and shepherds out of their ancestral homes. Such details are not greatly important, and we can comprehend Vergil well without them; but they are at least windows into the room of a poet's real experiences and reveal him slowly developing his art.

But after all is said about the *Vitae*, the scholia, and the minor poems we can do well without all of them. To evaluate the very important facts of Vergil's environment which left so deep an impress upon his work we abandon the paltry *Vitae* completely and go to Cicero's *Letters* and the historians for an abundant mass of pertinent data. It is there that we learn what a sensitive poet like Vergil lived through that shaped the sympathetic philosophy of the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*. And beyond his intense experiences, which he shared with many others, the outstanding document in Vergil's biography is the volume of his poetry. External facts cannot explain that. It alone discloses the genius which inexplicable nature gave to him. And that volume also reveals, better than any chance data, what use he made of his experiences. It reveals the amazing wealth of reading in the best work of two great literatures, in their histories and philosophies; and it reveals a deep and studied observation of a rich civilization that was in his day passing through the critical battles which could well turn a sensitive poet into a melancholy philosopher of a national epic.³

³ The following works are important: J. Brummer, *Vitae Vergilianae*: Leipzig, B. G. Teubner (1912); E. Norden, "De Vitis Vergilianis," *Rhein. Mus.* LXI (1906), 166-77; F. Vollmer, "Die Kleineren Gedichte Vergils," *Sitzber. Münch. Acad.* 1907, pp. 335-74; W. Kroll, "Randbemerkungen," *Rhein. Mus.* LXIV (1909), 50-55; E. Diehl, *Die Vitae Vergilianae und Ihre Antiken Quellen*: Bonn, Marcus u. Weber (1911); A. Klotz, "Vergils Vater," *Rhein. Mus.* LXVI (1912), 306-09; E. K. Rand, "Young Virgil's Poetry," *Harvard Stud.* xxx (1919), 103-85; and R. S. Conway, "Where Was Vergil's Farm?" in *The Vergilian Age*: Cambridge, Harvard University Press (1928), 14-40.

THE *AENEID* AS A WORK OF ART

By J. W. MACKAIL,
Formerly Professor of Poetry
University of Oxford

In the last generation Virgil has come by his own. The dust of confused and often prejudiced criticism has cleared away. We have returned from the aberrations of the nineteenth century to a wider view and a deeper insight. Virgil is now approached with the full armament of modern research and of trained scholarship and, also, which is more important still, with a firmer grasp and greater appreciation of poetry as an art and of Virgil himself as an artist.

He was more than an artist. He was the imaginative interpreter and the spiritual creator of a great ideal, for human life and for the organization of a nation and a world. The epithets lavished on him by Dante more than six hundred years ago hold good in their wide meaning: "Sage guide, high teacher, grand commander, supreme excellence, ocean of all wisdom." It was of the author of the *Aeneid* that Dante felt and spoke thus. The art of the *Georgics* may be, within its scope, even more consummate; we may sometimes be inclined to accept the incisive words of Dryden when he calls the *Georgics*, in a phrase of magnificent simplicity, "the best poem of the best poet." But the *Aeneid* is greater in its incompleteness than the *Georgics* are in their perfection. Its importance as a statement of the aims of the new empire, the tasks set before it, and the ideals which it embodied, is now universally recognized. From this point of view, the author of the *Aeneid* is one of the great directing and controlling forces in human history. But he is in the first instance and primarily a poet. Even by Dante he is normally spoken of simply as *il poeta*

— not a poet but *the* poet, any qualifying or explanatory epithet being superfluous.

The disintegrating criticism of the nineteenth century, "looking in the dark for what was not there," did what it could to depreciate the artistic quality and the artistic unity of the *Aeneid*. It could not, as it did with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, rend the poem into tatters. It could not, as it did with the Shakespearean Canon, parcel out authorship among a dozen different hands. But what it did was equally futile; instead of studying the *Aeneid* as a work of art, it applied to it certain rigid conventional canons and condemned it where it did not comply with them. This was the easier and the more tempting, because of the incomplete state in which the poem was left at the poet's death. He had meant to spend three years more on its completion; and one cannot wonder that, with his sensitiveness and his knowledge of how far it still fell short of his design, he should have wished to commit it to the flames and made it his last injunction that it should be suppressed or destroyed. He could not without dismay think of what might happen under the editorial hands that must of necessity be set to work on it if it were to be published at all. As it stood in the autographed or dictated manuscripts it was full of stop-gap lines, of unrevised drafts, of paragraphs marked for cancellation, of others tentatively added in the margin. A substantial reconstruction of one whole book, the third, was still in progress; another book, the tenth, was not fully put together. There were a number of detached passages with which the editors had to deal either by inserting them where they seemed to fit in best or by omitting them altogether.

But they performed their task with great skill; and with a judgment which we must admit to be sound, even if we regard it with a measure of wistful regret, they effaced themselves and left (so far as is known) no record of their actual work. Even more, they suppressed, and in all probability destroyed, the manuscript draft from which they assembled (to use the term of mechanics) the authorized text of the *Aeneid*. They were justified in this by the event, for the *Aeneid* from the moment of its publication became the great national and imperial poem. Detailed crit-

icism of its defects was confined to critics and grammarians. For the Latin world, as for the whole of western civilization since, it has been accepted as a complete work. In the result of the minute analysis and stringent criticism to which it has in our own time been subjected, it seems now as great as ever, or even greater; even its imperfections or incompletions, as with the sculpture of Michelangelo, enhance its appeal to the imagination and bring it nearer to our life, as something, in the words of one of our own poets, "not too steadfastly felicitous or too divinely alien to console."

Its felicities of detail are universally recognized. What is generally less appreciated is its structural quality and its epic unity. Towards that appreciation, the first step to be taken is to get rid, once for all, of the idea that it consists of two poems soldered together but essentially detachable — an epic of war added to an epic of adventure, an *Iliad* superimposed on an *Odyssey*. Very little thought is needed to make it clear that neither of the two halves, Books I-VI and Books VII-XII, is a substantive epic by itself, and not much more to realize that the whole poem, while it spreads out into episodes as it passes from the fall of Troy to the establishment of a kingdom in Italy, is a continuous and ordered movement towards which the successive scenes are subordinated. Its hero is Aeneas, and its title is the *Aeneid*. But Aeneas is not only an epic hero but a symbolical figure. The scope of the *Aeneid* is incisively marked by the stress laid in the proem (before Aeneas' own name has been mentioned) on the two keywords *Italiam* and *Romae*; and with like emphasis at its conclusion comes the majestic line set in the mouth of the reconciled deity as she accepts the ordinance of fate (XII, 827):

Sit Romana potens Italia virtute propago,

words that are at once a prayer and a prophecy, a decree and a benediction. The alternative title under which the *Aeneid* was popularly known even while Virgil was still at work on it, *Gesta Populi Romani*, "The Achievements of the Roman People," expressed the feeling that this was its real purport, that it was the

expression, in the concrete form of art, of Roman greatness, of the Roman ideal.

When this central motive is realized, we shall begin to realize the structural unity which underlies and interlinks the complex fabric of the poem and can proceed to grasp it as a whole and to read it as it ought to be read. Its use for nearly two thousand years as a schoolbook has had the incidental drawback of its being read only in fragments; and these have mainly been taken from the first part of the poem, partly for the simple reason that it comes first, and partly because Books II and IV are in some degree self-contained and detachable. Both these and the intermezzo of Book VI have tended to be taken too much in isolation and too little as integral, though in a sense episodic, parts of a larger fabric. This in itself might not do much harm, but it has had the further and unfortunate result that Books VII-XII have been by comparison slighted and neglected. It is not uncommon to find some, even among those who have gone through a classical education, unfamiliar with them, or even to all intents and purposes ignorant of them, and ready to accept the conventional depreciation of them as inferior, imitative, and uninteresting. This view is not only false in itself but fatal to appreciation of the whole scope and purport of the *Aeneid*. For they in fact present its main theme, of which the earlier books are an enriched and amplified prelude. Virgil himself emphasizes this in the significant words (VII, 44f),

*Maior rerum mihi nascitur ordo,
maius opus moveo,*

of the new proem with which Book VII opens. Hitherto he has been laying foundations, broad and deep, for the "larger work" which is to be the superstructure, or, to vary the metaphor, has been pursuing his course through winding channels with alternations of river and lake and is now launching out on a steady undeviating voyage. Whether the preludes are in due proportion to the main theme, whether for the architectural scheme of his epic the magnificent episodes of the Fall of Troy and the Tragedy of Carthage do not bulk too largely and raise the poem to its

highest tension prematurely, is a different question; what is important to observe is that the question can only be raised relevantly, and can only be answered rationally, by considering these episodes, just as much as the narrative in which they are inserted, in their relation to the work of art as a whole, to the totality of the *Aeneid*. If that be neglected, the question ceases to have any meaning.

The scheme of the national, or rather the imperial, epic had, for Virgil's purposes, to include both Troy and Carthage, the former to place Rome, or Roman Italy, as the offspring and heir of the earlier civilization which she had subdued or incorporated; the latter to recall the greatest crisis in actual Roman history, from which the Republic had emerged scarred and stained but victorious and an empire. The imaginative treatment of these two motives lies at the basis of Books II and IV and lifts them from being romantic episodes into structural elements. Yet the fusion is not complete; and we can only dimly conjecture how, or to what degree, Virgil might have completed it if he had lived to remodel the structure in which they are embedded. There are quite clear indications that Book III as it stands is, on a larger scale, what he himself called a *tibicen*, a provisional stop-gap. He had begun to recompose in it, on a fresh plan, material which had at an earlier stage been treated differently. We cannot assume that this plan would have been final. Other devices may well have been in his mind. Much of the actual contents of the book could, e.g., have been redistributed, by the artifices of which Virgil was a consummate master; and of many other portions it might be said without hesitation we should not miss them if they had never reached us — they are in no way structurally essential. But it is idle to wander into regions of conjecture. What is important, in regarding the *Aeneid* from the side of craftsmanship, is to observe that the structure of the last six books (apart of course from passages here and there which are unfinished or unplaced, or merely tentative and provisional) marks an advance on the earlier part of the poem in coherence and handling. The great episodes in them — the catalogue of the Italian armies in Book VII, the visit to the site of Rome in Book VIII, the story of Nisus



Fig. 1. — FIRST OR SECOND CENTURY MOSAIC FOUND IN 1896 AT SOUSSE (ANCIENT HADRUMETUM), TUNIS, AND REPRESENTING CLIO, VERGIL, AND MELPOMENE. Reproduced, with permission, from Mary H. Swindler, *Ancient Painting*: Yale University Press (1929), fig. 639.



Fig. 2. — STATUE OF VERGIL AT PIETOLE, TRADITIONALLY IDENTIFIED WITH ANDES, THE BIRTHPLACE OF VERGIL. Photo Alinari.

and Euryalus in Book ix, the exquisite epic idyll of Camilla in Book xi — are none of them detachable. They are fully incorporated in the main structure and are essential parts of it. And in Book xii, without any jar of his machinery, without any startling change of key such as is in the earlier books of the *Aeneid* more than once or twice made, Virgil rises to his very greatest. Long study of years brings us, I think, to read these later books even more, and with even greater delight, than the earlier books which had first captivated our imagination; not that we appreciate the earlier books less, but that we appreciate the later books more and yet more. Certainly at all events one comes to regard Book ii with its splendid perfection, Book iv with its tragic pathos, and Book vi with its broken gleams and cloudy magnificence, as antechambers through which one has passed and to which one will again and again return. One also comes to realize that Book xii reaches an even higher point of artistic achievement and marks the utmost of what poetry can do, in its dramatic value, its masterly construction, and its faultless diction and rhythm. "It is my experience," Mr. Warde Fowler wrote after a lifelong intimacy with Virgil, "that the twelfth book calls for more thinking, more leisurely reading, than any other part of the poem"; and what is certain is that those who do not know it do not know Virgil. But like the other outstanding portions of the *Aeneid*, it can only be appreciated in its full significance if it is read and felt in its connection with the *Aeneid* as a whole.

Virgil is, in the phrase aptly used of him by Tennyson, a "lord of language." No amount of minute and intensive study is wasted on this side of his poetry. But in such study, as we pass the fabric inch by inch under scrutiny, there is risk of losing sight of the substance in absorption over the manipulation. To examine the *Aeneid* line by line and word by word, to traverse it from end to end in linguistic or grammatical or textual study, is useful and, for a scholar in the full sense, is even necessary. But it is not for the sake of such study that poetry exists. Still more dangerous, because it is more attractive, is absorption in the investigation of Virgil's sources, whether Greek or earlier Latin, literary or legendary, for with the *Aeneid*, as with any great work of art,

what matters is not what the artist made it out of but what he made it into. Either way, it is too easy to lose grasp (or never to gain it) of its larger and more vital qualities; of the art with which its complex motives are linked up and intertwined; of the guiding thread, the evolution and revelation of the divine purpose as fulfilled in the Roman Empire, which runs through the whole; of the solidity of its construction and the unity of its design. To this larger view, the gaps, the interstices, the unfinished or displaced fragments which were left in it at Virgil's death are, like the verbal and metrical and rhetorical artifices on which professional students quite rightly lay stress, of secondary importance and almost negligible. It must be read as a whole, and read not only repeatedly but rapidly, for appreciation alike of the way in which, at the junction of two worlds, it gathers up the past, interprets the present, and prophesies the future, and of its human sympathy, the "Virgilian pity" which lies at its heart and goes straight to our own. Only thus can it yield its inmost value; only thus reveal itself as the voice of Rome and the voice of mankind.

VERGIL AND THE TRAGIC DRAMA

By NORMAN W. DEWITT
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Shortly after 40 B.C. a group of talented young men began to assemble under the shrewd patronage of Maecenas. They quickly perceived their unusual opportunity and, in much the same way as the senate allotted the provinces, proceeded to assign to one another the various branches of writing. To Vergil was allowed as his field the humble pastoral, which in the current classification of poetry occupied the lowest place, just as the shepherd stood lowest in the social scale. With his *molle atque facetum*, "rustic mirth and wantonness," Vergil appealed to Horace (*Satires* I, 10, 44) precisely as the young Shakespeare, "Fancy's child," appealed to Milton "with his native wood-notes wild." The Roman, like the Englishman, was still to reveal himself as a tragedian.

In 29 B.C., when the time had arrived to merge the circle of Maecenas with the larger circle of Augustus, it was evident that the first cast of rôles could not endure. New talent had been discovered and older writers had experienced a change of taste. Vergil stepped into the place of Varius as epic poet, a promotion to which the distinctly patriotic note in the *Georgics* had decisively nominated him.

This new allotment of rôles was never questioned while the authors lived, but posterity was still to utter a judgment. It did not choose to preserve the works of Pollio and Varius. It did not choose to revise the verdict of contemporaries upon the merits of Propertius, Tibullus, Livy, and Horace. Upon Vergil it bestowed a prize to which in his most ardent dream of fame he had never aspired. A brief century after his lamented death the epigrammatist Martial crowned him with the magnificent epithet *cothurnatus*, "master of the tragic art." Three centuries later the

emotional Augustine was weeping more copiously over poor Dido's unhappy fate than over his own sins. At the close of the Middle Ages the pious Dante in the *Divine Comedy* classified the *Aeneid* as a tragedy. A tragedy it is, in feeling, style, form, and structure.

Cothurnatus Vergilius, "buskined Vergil," as Milton would have rendered it, conveys a laggard meaning nowadays. The symbolism of the *cothurnus*, the high and regal shoe of the tragic actor, has been blotted from our imaginations by many revolutions of culture. Its once luxurious suggestions of moving spectacle, inviolable, eternal law, high dispute of matters human and divine, the clash of royal pride and unalterable fate, the pathos of ill-starred lives — all these sumptuous associations, once the common property of intelligent minds, have become things that a few learn out of books. They may still be learned from Vergil's *Aeneid*.

Vergil's approach to the tragic view of life was tedious, painful, roundabout, and involuntary. It was the ultimate effect of a consistent series of calamities upon a sensitive, aspiring, and developing mind. At the age of sixteen he was a happy boy composing an amusing poem called the "Mosquito" (*Culex*). At twenty-two his health had been wrecked for life by one bitter military campaign in devastating cold followed by prostrating heat. He recovered sufficient strength to permit of a single humiliating appearance as a pleader in court, which served to clinch his hatred of the forum. At twenty-five, turning his back upon the world, he was seeking happiness in the friendly philosophy of Epicurus. At twenty-seven he was being stripped of his paternal estate by the very political party to which he logically belonged. It was immediately after this experience of violence that he began to write genuine poetry for the first time. The curve of his fortune sank low before it took an upward turn for a rapid but steady climb.

Vergil captured in a brief career of writing the affection and the imagination of his age, which no man can do unless he be the product of that age. He was in no sense precocious; the first true heir of his invention appeared at the age of twenty-seven, and it

was not momentous. His depth and wealth of feeling were born of his environment and harsh adversity. There is little in his art for which we cannot account, little in his sentiments of which we cannot see the counterpart in the contemporary world. His style, of a sustained stateliness and occasional tragic intensity, his psychology of character, a temperate fatalism, his patriotism, Italic and imperial, his conception of world progress and of Rome's place in the cosmic order — all these are clearly to be explained in the surroundings of his youth. Destiny first punished, disciplined, and humiliated him, then showed him a narrow door of hope leading to a new world, of which he was to be the guide and prophet.

The outstanding qualities of his style are a sustained dignity combined with an intensified simplicity; but this simplicity is sometimes, after the manner of Aeschylus, intensified to the point of obscurity. Take for an example the famous sentiment of *Aeneid* VI, 743, *Quisque suos patimur manes*. These four words taken singly are simple enough, but their significance in combination becomes manifest only after a concentrated effort of thought: "Whatsoever a man soweth in the earthly life, that do we reap in the life after death." In other passages we find not an ethical but an oracular obscurity. The following will serve as an instance (x, 111f):

*Sua cuique exorsa laborem
fortunamque ferent.*

The reference is to Turnus and Aeneas. "To each what first he does shall bring distress or victory." It was on that day that Turnus slew Pallas. By this deed he sealed his own doom.

Vergil's conception of character is stamped with a definite fatalism, though it somewhat transcends the fatalism of the Greek drama. It comes in part of Stoic determinism, in part of Chaldean astrology, which had recently been fused together in Roman thought.

The statement of Suetonius that the poet studied "mathematics" is significant; *mathematicus* in those days meant "astrologer." Already the practice of this superstition had penetrated the Roman view of life as thoroughly as the doctrine of evolution

masters our own. The destiny of every man was believed to have been written in the stars from the moment of his birth. He might be brave or cowardly, but he was also *felix* or *infelix*, "lucky" or "unlucky." Even Cicero (*De Imp. Cn. Pompei* 10, 28) in speaking before a popular audience of the perfect general placed *felicitas* on a par with *scientia*, *virtus*, and *auctoritas*. Vergil's favorite epithet *infelix* (sixty-seven instances) flickers between the old and the new meaning. Unhappy Dido "calls upon the stars that are privy to her doom" (*Aeneid* iv, 519f). Poor Nisus (*ibid.* ix, 430) is dogged by a consciousness that he is ill-starred:

Tantum infelicem nimium dilexit amicum.

"His only fault, he loved too much an ill-starred friend." Nisus had read his own horoscope.

Without belief in the play of fate in the world at large there can be no tragic view of history. Vergil's conception of it, like all his thought, is composite, an intermingling of popular determinism with the Sibylline faith in a golden future, slyly couched in conventional terms of the Homeric epic and the Attic drama. A state, a city, like a human being, has its individual fate. Rome and Aeneas have their appointed destinies; but Turnus insists that he too has fates, and he is not unconscious (*Aeneid* ix, 136f) that they are pitted against the fates of his opponents:

*Sunt et mea contra
fata mihi.*

Even Juno (*ibid.* xii, 150) adopts astrological language and joins it with a formula of Greek theology:

Parcarumque dies et vis inimica propinquat.

"The day appointed of the fates and a hostile influence draw near." Turnus had courage, but something he lacked. He is *audax*, which old Servius, who had not yet lost the key to its meaning, quaintly explains *fortis sine felicitate*, "courageous without fortune."¹ The very stars in their courses were fighting against Turnus.

It comes very near the truth to think of the *Aeneid* as a suite of

¹ Cf. note to ix, 3; viii, 110, *audacia* = *virtus sine fortuna*.

tragic stories, ambiguously shadowing the collapse of one power after another that Rome might be established. In the first place Troy must fall that Rome may rise, the theme of the second book. The fourth book, the pretended cause discovered after the event (aetiological drama), serves to anticipate in an illustrious way the catastrophe of Carthage. The last six appear to symbolize the warlike resistance of the West. Turnus is more than the king of the Rutulans. "Poetry," says Aristotle, "is more universal than history." Turnus is a composite of Hannibal, Sertorius, Vercingetorix, and a nameless aristocracy of frustrated valor. He stands for the tragedy of empire, the pathos of the ill-starred, upon whom the fates bestow *fortitudo sine felicitate*, "courage without fortune."

The second book, the fall of Troy, is a dramatic pageant, vaguely individualized in the person of Priam. For a stage we view the whole Sigeian shore, for a background the storied battlements of Troy, for a chorus the throngs of citizens pouring from the city gates. The traitor Sinon comes forward to appeal to Priam's pity, the bold Laocoon to his fears. The pious old king is won by entreaty; he yields to pity, and his immemorial kingdom falls a prey to mistaken virtue. The disaster is drawn to a scale commensurate with the dimensions of the stage. It is not merely an aged monarch that yields up his life within palace doors, but a blameless multitude that falls a sacrifice to its own blindness on a day of rejoicing. Upon the final scene the rescuing goddess makes her appearance, and the unwilling agent of heaven is saved to a distant, retreating destiny. The epic emerges from the tragedy.

The fourth book is the first great romantic tragedy of western European literature. Vergil rightly turned his back upon the themes of the Attic drama. The western world already in his day, and always since, has demanded romance. He was equally right in not rejecting the technique of the Attic drama. The story of Dido is so framed as to conform with all the essential requirements of classical tragedy. The action is rapid, consecutive, and continuous; it is enacted in a palace. The heroine is a queen and a queenly queen. A complete and balanced sequence of tragic

emotions runs its course: overmastering affection, reckless enjoyment, anguish of desolation, despair, and revenge. There is high dispute and pathetic soliloquy. The death scene is magnificently planned, rises to a passionate height, and falls away with touching pathos. The plot is lifted completely out of the Ariadne class of Hellenistic love stories. It is not pathetic; it is pitiful and terrible. Dido belongs in the company of the great heroines of all time, such as Andromache, Phaedra, Desdemona. The epic significance of the drama is derived from the radiant historical innuendo. The prayer of the dying queen for the birth of an avenger serves to prefigure the wars of Hannibal as a sequel of the tragedy.

The last six books are less easy to understand. The unity of single books, which characterized the first six, now gives way to unity of the group, which constitutes a minor suite of tragic incidents joined in series. The main theme is the story of Turnus. All the passages describing his actions, if brought together, comprise some sixteen hundred lines, a dramatic magnitude. The episodes are separated, however, to make room for embellishing incidents: the visit to the site of Rome, the adventure of Nisus and Euryalus, the transformation of the ships, and the little epic of Camilla. It is just as if Vergil had composed a tragedy of Turnus and then broken the sequence of the acts to admit the ornaments. The whole forms a dramatic series with intervening panels of variegated literary art, like choral songs separating the episodes of a classical drama. In opulence of content it is rather Shakespearean than classical.

Vergil's borrowings from Homer are invariably superficial, not structural. He did not follow the epic method of composition but the dramatic, like a playwright working upon a series of plays. A major unity of comprehensive scope is not wanting in the *Aeneid*, but the unity of the parts is more manifest. The poem was divided into books, not after it was composed, like the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, but before it was versified, like a trilogy comprising an *Agamemnon*, an *Orestes*, and an *Electra*. The embellishing incidents of the last six books are no casual digressions from a wandering plot; they were planned as panels of the literary frieze

in which they repose. The art of composition is similar to that of the Parthenon sculptures.

The episode of Nisus and Euryalus is a miniature drama of friendship. It falls naturally into five parts, precisely like a play: the colloquy of the two friends before the camp, the council of elders, the raid upon the Rutulans, the self-sacrifice of Nisus, and the aged mother's lament. The ancient counterpart of the plot is the dramatic tale of the friends Damon and Pythias and, in modern literature, the rôles of the friends Antonio and Bassanio in the *Merchant of Venice*. The unhappy ending of Vergil's story distinguishes it significantly from the other two.

Nisus is an ill-starred friend whose unselfish affection brought three to ruin. He was unlucky: he fell in the foot race. To his young favorite he was overindulgent: against his better judgment he admitted him to his nocturnal enterprise; imprudently he permitted him to don the gleaming helmet of Messapus; carelessly he allowed him to fall behind in the retreat. It was of no avail that he gave up his life; nothing was gained but a hero's death. To the aged mother of Euryalus his errors brought irreparable grief, and her lament closes the piece, a familiar feature of the tragic drama. This is a sad philosophy of life, though true, that virtues in excess may bring ruin to the innocent.

Camilla's story is a tragic epyllion, a little epic. It is a miniature tragedy of maiden asceticism, dauntless virginity. The romantic element is the absence of love. She is a typical Italian invention, daughter of a haughty brigand, always a favorite in those lands. She arrays herself in all the gaudiness of gold and color that Italian peasants adore. She is fleet of foot, like Diana herself, and she rides daringly like the brigand's daughter that she is. She lays low the giant Ornytus garbed in a bull's hide; his barbaric costume was an insult to womankind. She overtook by fleetness of foot the galloping horse of the fleeing Ligurian; she loathed treachery. She pursued the outlandish Chloereus to dispossess him of his finery; she despised a man dressed like a woman. She fell by an assassin's arrow. As Julius Caesar fell by the daggers of his friends, so Camilla gave up her life to the weapon of a jealous

ally. Her beauty, her prowess, her sex caused her fall. Even virtue and innocence in this life are punishable.

Vergil in his treatment of the element of time has chosen to follow the practice of the drama rather than that of the epic. There is no Homeric counting of the days, no rosy-fingered dawn, or darkening of the roads. Sunrise and sunset receive mention only when emotionally useful. Tradition gave to Aeneas four years of war in Italy. Vergil has transferred this interval to the term of his wanderings, making the magic number of seven. He has made a tragedy of the wars and condensed the space of them to a few days.

Turnus is a composite character. With a handful of horsemen he rides up insolently to the Trojan camp like Hannibal before the walls of Rome. He bursts into the Trojan camp like Coriolanus, a sinister comparison. He lays an ambush for the Trojans like Pontius, the tricky Samnite, at the Caudine Pass. His courage is founded upon faith in his destiny: "I too have my fates" is his slogan. He is like Shakespeare's Macbeth, whose spirits rose to the words, "None of woman born shall harm Macbeth." When disillusion comes, when the bird of ill-omen flies in his face, pale, like Macbeth when told that Macduff is not of woman born, he goes gallantly to a warrior's death. He had shown no pity for the youthful Pallas; he deserved none from Aeneas.

The poem ends abruptly. No moral is drawn, no lamentation is penned. Yet every reader mourns for Turnus; his useless valor works its way into our hearts, *fortis sine felicitate*.

It was not only natural, it was all but inevitable, that Vergil's epic should be built upon tragic principles. A succession of world tragedies had enacted itself before his very eyes: he had witnessed the fall of Pompey, for all his boasted *felicitas*; he had seen Caesar go down, the favorite of Fortune. In the minor but painful calamities of his own countryside he had played a part: like his hero Aeneas he had been a refugee, driven to a new destiny beyond his choice; the loss of his patrimony was sheer *infelicitas*. If Dido's death is grandly conceived, so was Cleopatra's. If Turnus struggled against the star of Aeneas and of Rome, so did Mark Antony

against that of Augustus.² The poet was probably in Rome when Vercingetorix, the Turnus of Gaul, went to his death in 46 B.C.

History, life, experience, study, Chaldean astrology, and Stoic determinism — all equally schooled the poet to write tragedy. Only the Sibylline faith in a golden future could suggest that fate, though inexorable, might also be providential. Without the Messianic *Eclogue* there could have been no *Aeneid*.

² Plutarch, *Antony* XXXIII.

VIRGIL, AN APPRECIATION

By T. R. GLOVER
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Robert Louis Stevenson was not in the stricter sense a scholar; but he had been bred at school and college in Latin, and he came to the classics as a humanist and a man of letters. His own story is full of references to his Latin authors. Who can forget the episode of the young parson fetched in a hurry at dawn to the bedside in the Davos hotel to see Stevenson, who had asked to see him, and the eager request from a very sick man as he entered the room, "For God's sake, have you a Horace?" English *Alcaics* and translations from Martial are found in his letters and notebooks. He was not, we learn from his biographer, and we might have guessed it, a precise or supremely accurate Latinist; but to understand literature and to feel it, you do not need to be precise — perhaps you are safer there if you are not precise. "Much have I traveled in the realms of gold," wrote a young man, supposed to be an apothecary's apprentice; and that was his qualification for enjoying Homer and realizing Homer's greatness. Similarly, at some stage in his life, Stevenson went back to his *Aeneid*, not in a translation, however, but in the original; and in one at least of his letters we find him calling it "one of the tops of human achievement." The phrase is not, of course, to be taken mathematically; it is the spontaneous phrase of one great writer who has been enjoying another.

"And you must love him, ere to you he will seem worthy of your love," is Wordsworth's account of the poet — not here meaning Virgil, but the poet in general; and he is surely right. Until you submit your mind and heart to the man of genius, foregoing criticism, lexicography, and even history, in sheer surrender to enjoyment, you have no chance of reaching his secret, of

capturing the supreme things which he has to give you. This is not to renounce or denounce lexicography, metric, antiquarian research — far from it. Only, when lexicographer and antiquary have done their utmost, you have penetrated no further than the poet's laboratory, as it were. Yes; he knew (right or wrong, let us concede it) all the strange lore of old-time usage, legend, and religion that Servius and Macrobius, in their love of him, can amass for us; he read all the books they tell us he read and prove that he read. But then the lexicographers and antiquaries were equally well equipped — better equipped, perhaps — and wrote no *Aeneids*. And, after all, as one reads the *Aeneid*, we no more think of all that the antiquaries and their friends have been telling us than we instinctively think of H₂O when we look at Niagara. The torrent has somehow something that the chemist cannot quite analyze. The poet does more, after all, with alchemy than chemistry; it is magic that he uses — “out of three sounds to frame not a fourth sound but a star” — and he himself cannot tell you how he does it. Plato knew this; the poetry of the madman, who goes, distraught and no longer master of himself, to the gates of the Muses, has something about it that the well-informed and self-possessed never achieve. Yet with the greatest poets the magic and the sheer sense forget “the ancient quarrel of poets and philosophers” and work together, like the fire and water of Aeschylus, hostile of old but now conspired.

It is the man of letters who will be most apt to recognize the great quality of the supreme poet. He is the magician's apprentice; and he knows, better than other men, how immeasurably hard it is to do the supreme things and with what miraculous ease the great man does them, and with what eternal success.

He, with a “Look you!”, vents a brace of rhymes,
And in there breaks the sudden rose herself. . . .
Buries us with a glory, young once more,
Pouring heaven into this shut house of life.

There never was a more industrious apprentice in the school of letters than Stevenson; and here he comes telling the scholars that the author they know so much more about than he does is out of their reckoning great.

I suppose that it was as a great piece of construction, of architecture, that the *Aeneid* impressed Stevenson. Meter and language would be more apt to touch the pure scholar so called. Tennyson has emphasized one phase of Virgil as "lord of language" —

All the charm of all the Muses
often flowering in a lonely word.

The pure scholar, bred from schooldays on Latin verse, will speak with more feeling about meter. He will have at his fingers' ends the history of Latin meter from Ennius to Claudian, and he will know it not only from analysis and from counting (it may be) elisions, fourth-foot trochees, or spondaic endings, but from writing Latin verse himself, now in one style, now in another (like Stevenson's "sedulous ape"), and then realizing, more by instinct than by any analysis, that he has used here a movement which somehow, when the first throes of composition are over, seems alien to the tone or style of the master he is imitating. On reflection he asks himself has he seen anything quite of this type, and he is uneasy. But why has the master *not* done a thing which came so obviously? Why was that innocent pause, that quite ordinary elision, not to be found on subsequent search in the master's hundreds of lines? Why should he not have used it? Or again, to borrow a suggestion from Mr. J. W. Mackail, why are verse-movements to be found in the last six books of the *Aeneid*, which, more by memory (again) than by counting, seem to the attentive reader not to have been familiar in the first six? An impossible question! Who of us is to know (we can all guess) the quiet, imperceptible changes in a poet's feeling? Did Virgil himself know or notice what Mr. Mackail tells us, and tells us truly? "For variety" poets do this and that, we say bluntly. Tacitus varies phrase and grammar, has so many dozens of variants for the common note "he died." — And he does it all on purpose? Does he — invariably? Well, a poet's turns of thought — and here, we had better say, of feeling — are a good deal subtler. There is a delight for the lover of Virgil, bred to verse-writing, in watching the verse-movements more closely than the

poet perhaps did — consciously checking what the poet did not quite so consciously. The result may be catalogue, or may be feeling, with the student. For the reader who sits at the poet's feet (I hope this expression may be forgiven) analysis is all lost in the music; and in this as in all music, in all great creation, the enjoyment is more than the analysis — it takes you somehow further into the great man's heart.

But to return to construction. Twice lately I have read the *Aeneid* from end to end consecutively, not for class purposes, not for this commemorative essay either, but for myself, as one would read *Don Quixote* or *As You Like It* for one's soul's good. That play, e.g., you inevitably read as a whole, as a unity; but I have a horrid suspicion that many scholars have, like myself, only very seldom, if ever, the leisure to take *Odyssey* or *Aeneid* as a unit and a whole. The *Odyssey* is easier, and more of us have read it in its full completeness, and more than once, than ever manage the same measure of justice with Virgil. Then I bless my stars for the chances that let me do it, and give my conclusion, never quite reached (I think) in days when I had to do this or that book at school, or this or that group of books with pupils in the Canadian university, that the *Aeneid* gains immensely by being read as Virgil conceived it, by being allowed the unity which he planned for it and gave it. Read otherwise, one can hardly resist the suspicion that it must inevitably drag in the second half. How many scholars have remarked with half-surprise that the invocation to the Muses when he comes to Italy seems to suggest that Virgil felt somehow that he had reached the heart of his theme? Yet the six books support one another; the Italian half of the poem supports itself and justifies itself, if you will drop the English use of it (for school or college) and read it, as R. L. Stevenson read it and as Virgil meant it to be read, as a single work, a thought-out whole.

Here I would digress a step or two. I have noticed with great interest, in reading (alas! in examinations and prize exercises) the work of the best undergraduate scholars of Cambridge over a good many years, the surprising skill with which a number of

them will write Alcaics or Elegiacs and give one somehow not only the verse- and rhythm-movements of Horace and Ovid but will reproduce their manner of thinking — the grace, the light touch, something of the sure swiftness of mind that you find in their exemplars. Verse really Virgilian I do not remember ever to have had from them, and I ask why. Is it that the verse-movement belongs to the massive construction and is integral with it, and that the manner is so essentially the mind, the style so exactly the thought, that we who are not poets on such a scale cannot capture even the obvious and external features of the verse? Few pieces of ancient or modern criticism have haunted me like the saying of Longinus *On the Sublime* (ix, 2): "The great style is the echo of the great soul" (ὕψος μεγαλοφροσύνης ἀπήχημα); and here I think I find one of the supreme instances and proofs of what Longinus says.

"The great soul" — I am quite clear that Longinus is right, and I realize progressively that Virgil is a great soul. I think of the mass of literature, Latin and Greek, that he read and mastered in the way of poets. I cannot whole-heartedly follow Professor Rand and Professor Tenney Frank in their reconstructions of Virgil's earlier life from the *Virgilian Appendix*. Much as I have enjoyed themselves and their work, I hesitate. But one thing is clear enough. The older Virgil is a deeper, stronger, surer nature than the young Virgil. Few things are so hard to track as spiritual growth. Dozens of English boys have written better at sixteen than Keats; but by twenty-one he had had somehow an entirely different development. The young Virgil shows the strong influence of teachers and libraries; like the good undergraduate, he assimilates what Siro and Parthenius teach him; he is properly Epicurean and Alexandrian. Yet he differs from other young Romans as well taught and as orthodox in school loyalties. He is not a singer of Euphorion; something takes him to Theocritus — some out-door human-hearted affinity, reinforced by admiration of Lucretius, greatest of Latins so far, and by personal experience of danger, outrage, and bereavement. Like Horace (whom he is not very like, far from it!) he will not be pleased



Fig. 3.— STATUE OF VERGIL BY QUADRELLI IN THE PIAZZA VIRGILIANA, MANTUA. Photo Alinari.



Fig. 4. — PORTRAIT OF VERGIL FROM THE CODEX ROMANUS IN THE VATICAN LIBRARY (CA. FIFTH CENTURY). Photo Sansaini.



Fig. 5. — MONUMENT TO VERGIL (A.D. 1220) ON THE EXTERIOR OF THE PALAZZO DELLA RAGIONE AT MANTUA. Photo Alinari.

permanently by the school's Alexandrinism, nor yet by mere Latin archaism. Each of them, like Spenser in English, must study the great examples of the past and rethink the native movements of his mother tongue. Horace does not write Alcaics like Alcaeus nor Sapphics like Sappho; Latin is not Greek; nor will Virgil write like Homer or Apollonius, nor like Ennius or Lucretius. Some strong native sense, some essential strength of character and of mind, safeguards him from imitation and drives him into deeper realization of his task, into a clearer sense of what Latin means and can do.

He gains by being an Italian, bred and born, native to his soil, no immigrant from overseas in a museum, in an alien land of *fellahin*. *Romanus Vergilius*, says the old critic. I always suppose that to most cultured people of his day Italy was a land as utterly unromantic and unlovely as the half-reclaimed Middle West of America — nothing about it Indian or Italian, as we interpret the words — a drab country of farms and ranches without a Wister's Virginian, unfamiliar as eighteenth-century Scotland, before Ossian and Cuchullin were discovered. Virgil knew better; and I need not here quote the first *Georgic* to prove it. Instead, I will digress again to personal reminiscence. The second time that I reread the *Aeneid*, I followed it up by reading the *Georgics* and after them the *Eclogues* — quite the wrong order, and yet I gained something, for it became clearer than ever how much greater the *Georgics* are than the *Eclogues*, for which, however, I had cherished for years the feeling that they are after all something more than Theocritus — an unfashionable belief. But, as I say, the *Georgics* are greater, and between them they begin the idealization of Italy.

Fluminaque antiquos subterlabentia muros [*Georgics* II, 157].

What a line! And those that follow are written in one heart at least with Ontario set for Benacus, rising with wave and voice of the sea; so true and so universal is it.

It is with his love of Italy that we link the great admiration which Virgil so obviously felt for Caesar and for Augustus. With some it is perhaps a matter of reproach to the poet, but such

a judgment needs reconsideration. In spite of much written nowadays to prove that Shakespeare wrote for a practical purpose, for hire in fact, following the taste of the hour to earn his hire from his patrons, the public, it is arguable that he wrote differently from others under the same obligation to win public goodwill and wrote to please himself, to express what was in his own mind, to carry the approval of the critic in his own heart. If Longinus is right in urging that the great work comes from the great nature, let us begin there always. What are the dominant motives with the great nature? A quiet estimate of the purposes and of the work of Julius and Augustus finds in them much to carry the suffrages of all good citizens, of all lovers of Italy, and men of peace. It is sounder criticism to interpret Augustus from the admiration of Virgil than to start from outside and work the other way on the presumption of motives not too high.

In the *Aeneid* the gods play a larger part than in the earlier poems, and for two reasons. The epic modeled on Homer obviously must have them, could not escape them; but there is surely another and a deeper reason. Virgil had been moving away from Epicurus for years, as we can see in various signal passages:

Fortunatus et ille deos qui novit agrestis [*Georgics* II, 493],

if not in the Silenus idyll; but above all in the philosophic digression from the bees

*Deum namque ire per omnes
terrasque tractusque maris caelumque profundum* [*Georgics* IV, 221f],

where, a line above, he is willing to consider the suggestion that the bees have something of the divine mind. In *Aeneas* we have the conception of a man in close touch with the mind of heaven. It might seem fanciful to compare the *Aeneid* with the *Pilgrim's Progress*. Yet the two great works have something in common: each is — or each carries in itself — a certain philosophy of life, the conception of man's life as a pilgrimage or voyage with a meaning and a purpose and, underlying all, a divine plan shared by the human heart. No one takes the shining ones of Bunyan as literal flesh and blood visitants; the book is allegory, though some

readers forget this in the vividness of the character drawing. Virgil, a former Epicurean, cannot be suspected of believing in too concrete theophanies; far from it — for one of the things that sadden his Aeneas is the fugitive nature of his contact with heaven; his goddess mother always eludes him in spite of her care for him:

*Quid natum totiens, crudelis tu quoque, falsis
ludis imaginibus?* [*Aeneid* 1, 407f.]

Like many another man with a mission, Aeneas has his hours of doubt and depression; his life is full of pain; *Italiam non sponte sequor*; he has had enough of war, more than enough; he hates the fate of Pallas and Lausus —

*At vero ut voltum vidit morientis et ora,
ora modis Anchisiades pallentia miris,
ingemuit miserans graviter dextramque tetendit,
et mentem patriae subiit pietatis imago* [*Aeneid* x, 821-24].

We are reconciled in the dying Lausus to his wicked old father, whose crimes were in the past but whose love for his son and his horse live till the end. No doubt there are wavering lines in the picture. Every allegory has its gaps; the *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Don Quixote* have here and there contradictions, details blurred or forgotten. Virgil had to keep to Homer's gods, drilled to some extent after Stoic and Roman models; but even so the actual gods were unequal to their task. It is perhaps in this new demand made of the gods — that they must share their purposes with men and sustain in some real spiritual sense those who will work with them — and in the failure of the traditional gods that we must look for one source at least of Sainte-Beuve's saying that for readers of Virgil the coming of Christ "*n' a rien qui étonne*." Virgil has never really jarred on the feelings of the church.

But whatever his readers make of his interpretation of life in relation to the gods, there never has been any doubt that Virgil is one of the great human poets who speak direct to the heart and draw life as we know it at its deepest. *Sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt*. Goethe once told Eckermann that man was not born to solve the problem of this universe but to find

out wherein it consists. Few poets of antiquity or of a later date have done more to bring home to us the nature of that problem.

"Old Mantuan, old Mantuan, who know thee not prize thee not." Let us borrow the precious sentence for the greater Mantuan. How many ages have known him and loved him, read him and reread him, had him in their hearts and found in him the story of their hearts? How much can great literature do for us? Not less than the utmost has Virgil done for sixty generations, reaching, capturing, and holding the tender hearts and the great souls. Augustine tells us how he wept for *ipsius umbra Creusae* or *Didonem extinctam ferroque extrema secutam*. Jerome in the Catacombs could only express what he felt with Virgil's aid:

Horror ubique animo, simul ipsa silentia terrent [*Aeneid* II, 755].

And to come to our own days and end, as we began, with R. L. Stevenson, he too was haunted by the mere beauty of a line, which to those who look back on the completed story of his life seems a true *sors Vergiliana*:

Iam medio apparet fluctu nemorosa Zacynthos [*Aeneid* III, 270].

And perhaps another may be allowed a confession and tell of two lines which have seemed to him to tell the story of life:

*Haud equidem sine mente, reor, sine numine divum
adsumus et portus delati intramus amicos* [*Aeneid* V, 56f].

VIRGIL THE MAGICIAN¹

By E. K. RAND
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In the dark and middle ages the poet Virgil was seen through a haze of romance. His reading of life was, with the help of allegory, magnified into omniscience; and he himself assumed the rôle of prophet, theologian, and wizard. Strange tales were told of his magical powers, and strange adventures were associated with his name. It is not my purpose, in honor of his birthday, to repeat these well-known fables or to show — what sadly needs showing — that an eminent Italian authority has grossly exaggerated mediaeval credulity and misinterpreted the spirit in which the romance of Virgil was fashioned. I am concerned rather with the actual temperament of Virgil as set forth in his poetry, which for astounding feats of magic may challenge comparison with the wildest inventions of mediaeval myth.

The art of magic, according to the *Oxford Concise Dictionary*, derives in part from an "inexplicable or remarkable influence producing surprising results," as when, we may add, an alchemist turns lead to gold, or a conjurer extracts alien objects from a hat, or Medea rejuvenates Aeson by plunging him in a medicated bath — in a word, magic is the skillful and unanalyzable transformation of one substance into another. How truly Virgil had this power we appreciate only when we examine in some detail the diverse elements of which his poetical creations are composed. And this means a study of his literary sources.

One might imagine that Virgil's sources had been studied enough. In one way they have been studied too much. A scholar today, equipped with a good memory or a copious collection of *indices verborum*, may readily collect so many coincidences

¹ This paper will appear, in an expanded form, in the Harris Lectureship series of Northwestern University.

between Virgil and his masters in incident and plot, in imagery and phrase, that after one has scanned the long array of deadly parallels the place for originality in Virgil's art seems small. We are tempted to form a picture of the poet in his workshop. He sits at a long table with many volumes of his sources before him; from one he abstracts a line, from another a half-line, from another a quarter-line, and turning them into Latin meter — if they are not already in Latin meter — he adds, by a special providence, a quarter-line of his own, and thus has two verses done. This, as one patient source-tracker remarked, is *Mosaikarbeit*. Doubtless if the poet had had the mind of the source-tracker, he would have built his lofty rhyme in precisely this way.

No study of the workings of a poet's mind should be attempted today without much pondering of that remarkable book by John Livingston Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu*.² With the help of Coleridge's notes on his own reading and after much traveling in the realms through which the poet's inquisitive mind had wandered, Mr. Lowes has set forth with an uncanny and indisputable exactness the mental processes that preceded the creative act; the adventures of Lowes are hardly less exciting than those of the ancient mariner himself. Virgil's notebooks have disappeared; but he, too, had a "falcon eye" that pounced on rare matter for poetry in the multitudinous things that he read. He, too, had a "deep well" of retentive memory in which diverse impressions were stored, for those ancient wells, sunk before the invention of printing had brought bane as well as blessing to the world, were roomier and deeper than those of the modern mind. The same mysterious, unconscious union of impressions must likewise have gone on in that deep well, whence the shaping spirit of the poet's imagination drew what he demanded from the chaos and molded it into perfect art.

We do not possess Virgil's notebooks, but certain priceless little anecdotes have been transmitted in the ancient *Life* of him that was compiled by Donatus from Suetonius, who doubtless took them from sources contemporary, or almost contemporary, with the poet himself. The source-tracker was active in Virgil's day.

² Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co. (1927).

Quintus Octavius Avitus collected eight volumes of *Coincidences* (ὁμοιότητες) with each pilfered verse and its author exactly labeled. Alas for the modern *obtrectatores* of the poet, these eight volumes are to be numbered among the major losses of Latin literature. How many extra bushels one could have collected of chips *aus Vergils Werkstätte!* They would have been no less valuable for one who would appreciate the poet's originality. Virgil himself answered his detractors neatly with the remark that, if they thought he had stolen his best things from Homer, why did they not attempt the same theft themselves? "They will find it easier," he declared, "to steal his club from Hercules than a verse from Homer." To steal bits here and there and fit them into a mosaic — no; that is not Virgil's way. The verse of Homer would still be Homer's and the thief would be caught in the act. Many things from Homer have gone into Virgil's poetry, but not until they have been absorbed into the mass of his memories and his fancies. When they emerge, they are his own.

The ancient *Life* also tells us that Virgil, in the fashion followed by some other poets, notably Goethe, made a prose draft of the *Aeneid* — how detailed we do not know — and wrought it into verse as inclination prompted, in no particular order. The mood for the downfall of Troy or for the vision in the Elysian plain or for morning birds on the primitive Palatine would come, and everything else stood aside. When the inspiration began to fade, he would write temporary verses, which he likened to scaffolding, which at least gave the outlines of the structure till the solid columns should be brought. And sometimes he knew he must pause in the middle of a verse, since the Muse dictated no further. But the message of the Muse had been crystal-clear to that point. Hence those "pathetic half-lines" which were deplored by Virgil's literary executors and by the stupid folk who tried to fill them out but which, with their wild, informal grace, come to modern readers as a happy surprise.

We are told further that the poet would read his verses aloud in a voice of sweetness and of wondrous charm. Taking turns with Maecenas, he read the *Georgics* to Octavian when the victor returned from Actium. He read him later, at his urging, the

second and the fourth and the sixth books of the *Aeneid* and so matched his voice with the spirit of the poem that, when he had finished the lines on the hapless Marcellus, Octavia, the boy's mother, whom her consort had invited to the reading, fainted and fell and hardly could be restored —

E cadde come corpo morto cade.

At such moments the poet and his Muse were one. Sometimes, as he read his verse aloud to himself, she would supply the fitting words at the points where he had halted before. His amanuensis, who bore the name Eros, perhaps by the compliment of his master, once heard him read on through one of the unfinished half-lines:

Misenum Aeoliden,

and the other half came to him at once:

quo non praestantior alter.

The next line too was unfinished:

Aere cicre viros

but in the same heat of inspiration he uttered the rest of it:

Martemque accendere cantu,

and ordered Eros to write down the new inventions in the text. These are not the most notable of Virgil's inventions, but they indicate that his inventiveness, like that of Coleridge, was no *creatio ex nihilo*, but that it germinated and grew and at times was checked in its growth before of a sudden, in the twinkling of an eye, it burst into full flower.

Not all of Virgil is perfect art. A poet may conceive a great plan; he may jot down in a notebook, or immediately consign to the deep well of memory, images or designs of poetic significance, which there await the flash of creation that never comes. Instead, the poet draws them out before the time and arranges them in a seemingly order that lacks the magic touch. This is "joiner's work," which may be found in abundance in the minor poems ascribed to Virgil. Assuming, on good ancient evidence, their genuineness, we may trace in them the growth of a poetic genius, not forgetting

the prayer of a witty postprandial orator that it would be a graceful tribute on Virgil's birthday to relieve him of the authorship of at least some of them, and not forgetting either that the poet himself had left them unmentioned in his backward glances at his earlier works. If the *Culex* is his, it is no mean performance, in plan and execution, for a lad of sixteen. It shows prophetic gleams, but it also shows plenty of joiner's work. The boy had read prodigiously, but his mind had not had time to assimilate, to transmute, and to recreate the mass of suggestions that it had absorbed. Witness the gnat's journey to the world below and the interminable account of the marvels that he saw there. Witness the flowers that are heaped upon his grave, a seedsman's catalogue, not the fragrant realities that the writer of the *Eclogues* or Milton can gather. The glint of magic fails.

Whatever his youthful experiments had been, Virgil found in his *Eclogues* fit language for his stirring thoughts. He was impelled to the pastoral partly because his inborn impulse to epic had been balked, partly because the love of his native countryside struggled for expression, partly because the wrongs of his town-folk cried for a great revenge, and partly because Pollio, the first of his heroes, had inspired him to the adventurous task. The last of these reasons is also the least. He never wrote for order.

Virgil's master in the pastoral was Theocritus, a genius of a different order, to whom he dutifully and gladly paid the homage due to the greatest name among singers of the field and fold. The *Idylls* of Theocritus were woven into the tissue of his mind. They lay in the deep well, along with the best of other poetry, Greek and Roman, and with visions of his native Mantua and the Brescian Alps, of the splendor of the bay of Naples, the river Galaesus, and the mountains of Sicily. Hero-worship was also there, with a lineage of heroes — Pollio, the first, then Varus and Gallus and, last but not least, the godlike Octavian. The wrongs of his countrymen, ejected to make room for the veterans of Antony and Octavian, were borne on his heart; and they mingled with the discordant pastoral scenes that his fancy was reshaping. There is, further, the surging prophecy of a new Rome under a new leader, the heir of all the ages and the ruler of a new and

golden age. Here is tumultuous chaos, and from it there took form under the poet's creative touch an Arcadian fairyland, harmonious and real.

The magic of the *Eclogues* would take a volume to unfold. I will display it, with some detail in just one of the poet's achievements, leaving the reader to hunt for the rest. Virgil's second *Eclogue*, undoubtedly his first essay in pastoral and, if we must judge relatively, not one of the very best, shows at the start the nature of his genius and its triumph.

This poem, though we can trace its antecedents, comes like a bolt from the blue. It gives no sense of the experiment. Virgil writes with the free joy of one who has found, after long searching, the appropriate form for irresistible emotions. For pastoral, he turns aside from the later Hellenistic decadence; his verse breathes again the sweet and vigorous air of Theocritus. There is the same revelry in the senses and the same protest against sentimentality. Corydon, like poor Polyphemus in the Greek poet's verses, finds balm for love in song and in his homely tasks; this lesson is suggested and not driven home, for Virgil is less didactic than Theocritus. There is a touch, too, of revolt from the conventions of the town, a relish for the wilds of nature where man does not come — a sentiment, sometimes called modern, which ran riot in Alexandrian poetry and which is treated by Virgil with both sincerity and reserve.

And now for the poet's magic. He knows Theocritus by heart and, sometimes consciously, sometimes, it may well be, unconsciously, echoes the haunting music of his master. But he remembers, too, what he himself has seen — downy quinces and waxen plums, and, most cursed prank of Nature that a gardener knows, the wind making havoc in flower-beds. The source-tracker, setting his parallel passages in array, points out that Virgil has committed, as Conington has it, an "incongruity." He has mixed a shepherd with the Cyclopes, who in Theocritus pour out their despair in similar strains. That is so. He has dismembered them and put them in a magical caldron and, with Medea's art, creates anew. Virgil's brown Campanian rustic has a character of his own; his passion is more serious than that of Polyphemus or the

melancholy swain of the third *Idyll*. The critic may analyze with profit this process of re-creation, but the result is that absolute art that defies analysis or criticism. Only an unsuccessful magician deserves ridicule. Let us see if those who have discovered the recipe can do the trick.

But there is another act of magic here. The main impulses of Virgil's early work, apart from his interest in Epicurean science, strive for expression in two poetical forms, the epic and the pastoral. The present poem fuses them in a literary creation, the epic pastoral. Into a form that he has produced from a dialect and an imagery essentially Theocritean, the poet breathes a spirit that never appears in Theocritus or in the poetry of his age. The subject is humble, but the verses are heroic. Is this the real pastoral? Is it not courtly and artificial and spurious? Perhaps it is pertinent to inquire whether Theocritus' Polyphemus is the real Polyphemus, who according to scientific authorities today was either a gorilla or a volcano; perhaps we may even inquire whether the fascinating shepherds of the *Idylls* were real country folk. Theocritus combines the typical and the real, in Virgil's way; he has the same magic of uniting different things. However, the spirit is wholly pastoral. Virgil, impelled by his temperament, tries a more dangerous experiment, the fusing of elements so diverse as country life and the grand style. But the fusion is successful, both in the sentiment and in the verse that embodies it, the "rich, Virgilian, rustic measure" with its Italian sweetness and strength.

*Aspice aratra iugo referunt suspensa iuveni
et sol crescentes decedens duplicat umbras;*

verses like these tell the finale of some great epic deed. Virgil's success in this hazardous attempt is set in conspicuous relief by the disastrous failures of his imitators — of all but one.

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown with ivy never sere;

the two lines are enough to set the key which had not been heard since the days of the verse which they echo:

Et vos o lauri, carpam et te, proxima myrte.

Milton's *Lycidas* has been condemned, by Dr. Johnson among others, for its mosaics of imitation and its incongruities; but for Walter Pater it set the high-water mark of English poetry. He who understands *Lycidas* will not be blind to the magic of Virgil's pastorals.

As Virgil wrote the closing lines of his *Georgics*, some seven years later, he looked back, with an amused affection, to what he calls the youthful hazard of his *Bucolics*:

*Carmina qui lusi pastorum audaxque inuenta
Tityre te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi.*

The *Bucolics* are indeed of a novel type, and one most hazardous for any save a magician. But the poem that he had just finished is no less daring. It is a poem on farming, eminently practical, full of sound precepts, and of delight in the dirty actualities of the soil. At the same time, in a way not yet adequately explained, it is a moral satire in which the larger ideas of the poem of Hesiod, who also was no simple farmer, are woven into a new design. It is a rhapsody with no touch of the sentimental. It is at once a tribute and a challenge to Lucretius, the master of his youthful mind. It is a philosophy of life, gained after turbulent reflections and perhaps not permanently gained. It is a tract for the times, though in no sense a document of propaganda written to order. Rather it is a warning to the state and an exhortation to its ruler to establish the strength of Rome, as of yore, in industry, contentment, religion, and peace. It is, finally, another bold flight into epic, in which the poet aspires to give the business of the farm a heroic setting — *angustis hunc addere rebus honorem* — in sounding verse, the epic tone rising or falling as the theme requires, now thundering against the menace of war, now moving calmly on high levels as it proclaims the glory of the countryside divine, now gliding on with exquisite grace in the sprightly mock-heroic of the bees, and at last speaking out loud and bold in the story of Orpheus, as Virgil, knowing that the moment has come, meets Homer on his own ground. Here is diversity, incongruity enough, in the elements from which the

poem is wrought, but only a golden harmony in the finished work. There are no patches here, purple or drab; there is no line, no word that does not play its part in a manual, and an epic, of farming. The *Georgics*, as Dryden observed, displayed Virgil's most finished art. What magic had created, patient care wrought into perfection.

We have no ancient manuscripts preserved which, like the successive editions of *The Ancient Mariner*, show where, and why, the poet made over the verses that first had flashed from him. But again we have a precious bit of information preserved by the ancient biographer, who states that when Virgil was at work on the *Georgics* he would write a great many verses — *plurimos versus* — and spend the whole day in reducing them to as few as possible — *ad paucissimos* — “not ineptly remarking that in the manner of a mother bear he gave his poem birth and licked it into shape.” Tennyson did not quite accurately describe

Old Virgil who would write ten lines, they say,
At dawn, and lavish all the golden day
To make them wealthier in his reader's eyes.

Virgil wrote more than ten lines at dawn — he wrote *plurimos versus*, in the fire of inspiration. At the end of the day, some ten remained, all of burnished gold. Miracles are wrought not only by lightning stroke, but by patient mixing and remixing of the elements in a crucible.

Who shall set forth the magic of the *Aeneid* in a page? It would take a magician to do it. The design of the epic, of which from his boyhood the poet had dreamed, was of amazing proportions and, like all his works, replete with incongruities. A lucky chance shows us how the plan developed in his mind. He first, as is set forth at the beginning of the third *Georgic*, would build by the banks of his native Mincio a temple to the victor, his hero Octavian. In other words, he will write an epic poem to celebrate his triumphs. The poem is concerned, accordingly, with contemporary events. There is, to be sure, an inferno, designed for the enemies of state, and the lineage of the Julians is deduced from Troy — just a tiny seed of mythology, from which the real

poem was destined to grow. For as it matured in his mind, the contemporary and historical elements withdrew to the background; the mythical and universal advanced to the fore. And yet the meaning of the poem is for Virgil's generation. Just as the subject of the *Georgics* is farming, although farming is glorified in its setting of ideals, so is the subject of the *Aeneid* still the rule of Augustus, the hopes of Rome, the mission of the present age, seen, however, from the remote past *sub specie aeternitatis*.

To form this design, much mellowing of the incongruous was needed in the deep well of the poet's mind. His sovereign master was Homer, whose verses none could steal; but there were minor masters of the epic and the epyllion to whom he turned, notably Apollonius Rhodius and Catullus and Father Ennius. Furthermore, the dramatic poets — and not Aeschylus alone — had taken slices from the Homeric feast. The characters of ancient epic had played their part in tragedy. It was through a tragic atmosphere that Virgil looked back at Homer. Tragedy is an essential part of Virgil's poem — he was forever joining together what critics would keep asunder. He was confronted, also, with a tangled mass of tradition, partly preserved for us by the historians and the ancient commentators on his poems; and all this he had to unfashion and remold. Yes; much was simmering in the deep well.

No less complex was the development of the characters in the poem. The greatest triumph is the creation of Dido. Much reading, observing, pondering, combining, fashioning, unfashioning went on in the poet's mind before that radiant woman stepped out in the scene:

Matri longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses.

She had probably appeared in the story of Aeneas as told by the Roman predecessors of Virgil; but she must be made worthy of Homer, since in the *Odyssey*, too, a hero had been diverted from his objective by an enchantress — by more than one enchantress. Then, too, the legends of maidens abandoned by false lovers must contribute to the picture. Medea stirred the poet's fancy, and she was also an enchantress. Something could be garnered from Apollonius' *Argonautica* and from the tragedy of Euripides.

Tragedy, again, was demanded, and a transmutation of Catullus' Ariadne from pathos into the sterner sentiment of the drama. A touch of Nausicaa is painted in, when Dido moves royally among her courtiers like Diana among her nymphs, as Homer had said of the daughter of Alcinous. But all these suggestions from masterpieces of the past would amount to nothing by the mere assembling of them. They are absorbed into the poet's creation — true queen and true woman, whose charm and whose betrayal bring every masculine reader to his knees and fill him with a sovereign contempt for the pious cad who preferred a hazy Italy to her. There is no need to debase this perfect art by imagining that Dido points a moral lesson, typifying some naughty Cleopatra for the shame of Mark Antony, who ought to have shown himself a good Stoic like Aeneas.

But there is magic in Aeneas, too. The masculine reader admits it when his indignation has cooled. The task for the poet was harder. The material to be molded was less ductile. We start with Odysseus, Homer's voyager, whom Aeneas, by many a skillful touch, is made to recall; the resemblances and the differences between the two are patent. Odysseus is a resourceful explorer of many men and many minds in the realm of romance in which his adventures are set. Aeneas is a symbol of Roman fate — and yet he must be human. To appreciate Virgil's success, the reader may turn to Apollonius of Rhodes. The hero, if hero is the word, of the *Argonautica* is, like Aeneas, a man of destiny and a man of sorrows. He is tender-hearted, and again, like Aeneas, he is powerfully sensitive to his conscience; he wears his conscience on his sleeve. But his conscience is flabby; it never tells him what to do. His real fate is a woman, herself a plaything of the gods, who saves and directs him. When he deserts her, as he will some day, he will cut a disgraceful figure in the act. Aeneas, in contrast, is firm. His heart contains strong emotions, mastered by will. His love for Dido shakes his being; her tragedy is his own. But confronted with plain duty, he makes his stern decision once and for all. He could not love her so much, loved he not honor more. Jason has been transmuted, magically, from a weakling to a hero.

We forget, sometimes, that the *Aeneid* did not, like the *Georgics*, receive the poet's finishing touch. He had taken the poem with him to Greece; in violet-crowned Athens or on the coast of Asia he would bring it to perfection, devoting three years to the task. His plans changed when he met Augustus there, and his change of plans meant the fatal visit to Megara and his death. Why did he wish to burn his masterpiece? It had meant tremendous toil. He had written Augustus before that it was well-nigh in a fit of insanity (*paene vitio mentis*) that he had attempted it. Doubtless his confidence was stronger when he had finished what we have today; yet he knew that some joiner's work was still there, some scaffolding that awaited the solid columns. There were the truncated verses; there were the inconsistencies in the plot, not evened off after the happy idea of an Italy only gradually revealed came to him when, in the third book, he took up the story of the voyage. And then the battle scenes! Homer had prescribed them and reveled in them. But who else could reproduce "Πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς, Homer's ferocious old boy?" Only the conscience of an Aeneas could induce Virgil to cultivate bloodthirstiness for bloodthirstiness' sake. And there was Aeneas himself. The poet knew what he had meant to make of him, but would the reader see? Three years of Athens and the cities of Asia. Golden mornings undisturbed. More acts of magic, transforming a word, a line, a book. But that was not to be. The poet lies on his death-bed. Well, burn the poem then. If they will have their way, they may cut it, for I should have cut — but let them not emend. Leave the rude work to be called, with its imperfections, my own.

It were ungracious on Virgil's birthday to point those imperfections out — ungracious to him and probably unkind to ourselves. For many critics who have been most alive to these imperfections have written their own sentence. Like the emenders of texts of whom Quintilian speaks, *dum poetae insectari volunt inscientiam suam confitentur*. It is a more profitable pastime to train ourselves to the detection of magic in the *Aeneid*. And a plenty of magic remains.

THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE VERGILIAN APPENDIX

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By the ninth century after Christ a number of relatively short poems had become incorporated in editions of Vergil's works. Of these a few are generally admitted to be from other hands than Vergil's. Others, such as the epigrams and Priapean poems, *Culex*, *Ciris*, *Moretum*, *Copa*, *Aetna*, *Dirae*, *Lydia*, have been widely discussed for many centuries.¹ Many are attested as Vergilian before the ninth century, in the biographical tradition, or in statements of poets or grammarians. Recent modern opinion has passed from extreme skepticism to a charitably receptive attitude. In such a highly controversial matter it is perhaps wise to consider them according to the degrees of likelihood that they are Vergil's work. Relatively valid arguments have been adduced for the authenticity of a few of the epigrams and for the *Culex*; for the other poems the evidence is either negative or adverse. The brevity necessary to a brief survey of the problem will not, I hope, be mistaken for dogmatism.²

¹ A statement in the *Life* by Donatus ascribes to Vergil all these poems except the *Moretum*; it qualifies the ascription of the *Aetna* as doubtful. If this statement goes back to Suetonius, it becomes the earliest bit of external evidence for the genuineness of the poems in the list, except in the case of the *Culex*, which is attested in the age of Nero as Vergil's work. The best text of the *Appendix* is that of Vollmer-Morel (*Poetae Latini Minores*, Vol. I): Leipzig, Teubner (1927); there is also an edition by Ellis in the *Bibliotheca Oxoniensis* (1907); neither has any commentary. In the second volume of his edition of Vergil in the Loeb Classical Library Fairclough provides a text and prose translation (1918).

² Recent discussions in English may be found in Mackail, "Virgil and Virgilianism," *Class. Rev.* xxii (1908), 65-73; Conway, *New Studies of a Great Inheritance*: London, Murray (1921), 66-104; Rand, "Young Virgil's Poetry," *Harv. Stud. Class. Phil.* xxx (1919), 103-85; Frank, "Vergil's Apprenticeship,"

At the outset it is well to remember that the practice of foisting poems upon distinguished authors was well established in antiquity; Ovid, as well as Vergil, suffered from the practice. And the making of books in ancient times fostered this tendency; a manuscript containing the authentic works of Vergil, followed by poems intended to be anonymous, would easily be misconstrued by a reader or copyist, and the anonymous poems would soon be attached to Vergil's name.

Ancient *Lives* of Vergil,³ and particularly the biography by Suetonius in the second century A.D., which survives in a modified form from the hand of Donatus, provide us with information about his friends and many of his early experiences. His special intimates were Lucius Varius and Plotius Tucca, later his literary executors. The *Life* by Donatus and ancient commentary on the authentic poems emphasize his early interest in philosophy, his studies under Siro (a leading Epicurean of the day), and his ambition, on finishing the *Aeneid*, to devote the rest of his life to philosophy.

In the collection of epigrams known as *Catalepton*⁴ are several poems in complete accord with these facts of his life. Either Vergil, or an impersonator of Vergil, is likely to have written them. One (*Catalepton* v) is of supreme importance in estimating Vergil's youthful reaction to rhetorical and antiquarian studies in the conventional classroom. As a young lover of good literature today resents the grammatical minutiae of the Latin classroom, so Vergil flees from the pedantry of school life in Rome to the harbor of refuge which philosophy under the teachings of Siro offers, presumably in the vicinity of Naples:

Class. Phil. xv (1920), 23-38, 103-19, and 230-44, and condensed in his *Vergil: A Biography*: New York, Holt and Co. (1922); DeWitt, *Virgil's Biographia Litteraria*: Toronto, Victoria College Press (1923); a fuller summary than the above, but undocumented, in Prescott, *The Development of Virgil's Art*: Chicago, University of Chicago Press (1927), 18-75.

³ The texts of the ancient biographies of Vergil may be found in *Vitae Vergilianae* edited by Brummer: Leipzig, Teubner (1912); also by Diehl, with commentary: Bonn, Marcus u. Weber (1911).

⁴ Special texts of the *Catalepton* with commentary (in German) by Birt, *Jugendverse und Heimatpoesie Vergils*: Leipzig, Teubner (1910), (in French) by Galletier: Paris, Hachette (1920).

Avaunt, ye vain bombastic crew,
 Crickets that swill no Attic dew;
 Good-bye, grammarians crass and narrow,
 Silius, Tarquitius, and Varro,
 A pedant tribe of fat-brained fools,
 The tinkling cymbals of the schools!
 Sextus, my friend of friends, good-bye,
 With all our pretty company!
 I'm sailing for the blissful shore,
 Great Siro's high recondite lore,
 That haven where my life shall be
 From every tyrant passion free.
 You too, sweet Muses mine, farewell!
 You too, sweet Muses mine, for truth to tell,
 Sweet were ye once, but now begone;
 And yet, and yet, return anon,
 And when I write, at whiles be seen
 In visits shy and far between.⁵

[Translated by T. H. Warren]

Discoveries of ancient papyri probably corroborate this early pursuit of philosophy and add the names of Quintilius Varus and either Plotius Tucca or Horace to the company of young Romans who with Vergil enjoyed the teaching of Siro and Philodemus.⁶ Vergil's sixth *Eclogue*, the song of Iopas in the first *Aeneid*, the philosophical groundwork of the sixth *Aeneid*, Vergil's own eloquent pronouncement of his personal ambition in *Georgics* II, 475-94, are some of the issues of this sojourn at Naples in his youth. Out of this intimacy with Siro the theme of *Catalepton* VIII may have developed, in which the poet, evidently fearing the effect of the confiscations in northern Italy upon his parents, has provided a refuge for them near Naples in a villa rented from Siro.

⁵ Clearly the author of this poem had written poetry before he joined Siro. It is not clear that *pudenter* in the last verse means that the earlier poems were indecent. The translator above is most happy in turning *pudenter et raro* as "shy and far between." The restraint of the Muses is referred to. For the use of *pudor* outside the moral sphere cf. *Eclogues* VII, 44, and Propertius I, 9, 33 and II, 12, 18.

⁶ Cf. Körte, "Augusteer bei Philodem," *Rhein. Mus.* XLV (1890), 172-77; Crönert, *Kolotes und Menedemos*, Index s.v. "Siro"; and Frank, *Class. Phil.* XV (1920), 106-15.

Scandal mongers find easy prey in the great men of literature and history. Early in the first century Asconius was already engaged in defending Vergil's character. One epigram (*Catalepton* I) may reveal our poet as a somewhat baffled member of a domestic triangle. The address to Vergil's friend, Tucca, is the chief mark of authenticity. Another (*Catalepton* VII), addressed to Varius, involves a confession of further amatory adventure and also of whimsical heterodoxy in violating the usage of purists — whether in respect to Greek words, or Latin words of debased currency, is not clear.⁷

These are the only epigrams which by their internal content point at all indubitably toward Vergilian handiwork. A few others are more weakly supported. The acquaintance of Vergil with Octavius Musa is faintly outlined in ancient commentary on *Eclogues* IX, 7 and in Horace, *Satires* I, 10, 81f. *Catalepton* IV is a eulogy on a Musa, and the author plays on the association of the name with the Muses; *Catalepton* XI appears to celebrate the death of an Octavius, though probably commemorating only his temporary decease at a drinking-party.⁸ In both poems literary efforts are extravagantly praised. If we choose to link the Musa and the Octavius of these two epigrams, Octavius Musa emerges, and again we might regard the two poems as authentic in so far as they are concerned with a person known to be an acquaintance of Vergil's though hardly so intimate as Varius and Tucca. For the brilliant parody of Catullus' poem on the yacht (*Catalepton* X) nothing but the setting of part of the action in the neighborhood of Vergil's early home can be urged as evidence. Quintilian's ascription of *Catalepton* II to Vergil has just as much value as the ascription of the entire *Catalepton* to Vergil in the *Life* by Donatus, if the statement in Donatus' *Life* goes back to Suetonius. But in this case the external evidence is stronger than for any of the other epigrams.⁹

⁷ Cf. Kroll, *Studien zum Verständnis d. röm. Lit.*: Stuttgart, J. B. Metzler (1924), 112; Jachmann, "Zu Vergils *Catalepton*," *Hermes* LVII (1922), 317-19; and Van Buren, "*Catalepton* VII," *Class. Rev.* XXXVI (1922), 115f for various recent views.

⁸ Cf. de Marchi, *Riv. di Fil.* XXXV (1907), 492-97.

⁹ Cf. Garrod, "Some Passages of the *Catalepton*," *Class. Quart.* IV (1910),

None of the other epigrams and none of the Priapean poems can lay any special claim to validity as Vergil's work. It would be interesting, if true, that Vergil initiated the composition of Priapean epigrams in Latin.¹⁰ The drastic invectives against Noc-tuinus (*Catalepton* VI and XII), the picture of dissolute living in XIII, if Vergilian, would confirm the gossip information regarding the poet's somewhat loose living in the *Lives* and in commen-tary on the authentic poems. The eulogy of an unknown king (*Catalepton* III)¹¹ and of Messalla (IX)¹² would add no luster to Vergil's poetic accomplishment. And *Catalepton* XIV, though clearly meant to celebrate the progress of an epic on Aeneas, is apparently the work of an imitator of Vergil who is appropriating phrases of the *Georgics* in summoning Venus, mother of the epic hero and ancestress of Octavian, to the poet's aid.¹³

Whether few or many of these poems are Vergil's, the total result is much the same. They reveal a youth whose maturing years were spent in the atmosphere of Catullus and others of the New Poets. They illustrate the meters and the manner of the generation of Catullus. Genial wit is manifest in the epigrams that are more likely to be genuine; in others, less probably Ver-gilian, this wit is coarsened into caustic satire and drastic invective.

The young elegist, Propertius (II, 34, 61-82), writing in the same decade in which Vergil was composing the *Aeneid*, does not include the short epic narrative on the gnat, *Culex*, in his list of 123-27; and Fairclough, "On the Virgilian *Catalepton* II," *Trans. Amer. Phil. Assoc.* XLVII (1916), 43-50.

¹⁰ A translation of the *Priapea* into verse by Whicher in *Latin Notes* for February, 1930. Cf. also Radford, "The *Priapea* and the Vergilian Appendix," *Trans. Amer. Phil. Assoc.* LII (1921), 148-77.

¹¹ Recent discussion of this and other epigrams by E. Reitzenstein, "Zur Erklärung der *Catalepton*-Gedichte," *Rhein. Mus.* LXXIX (1930), 65-92.

¹² The late date of the poem (after Messalla's triumph) militates against Vergil's authorship. Cf. on other matters Drachmann, "Zur *Cirisfrage*," *Hermes* XLIII (1908), 413-18, and Sommer, *De . . . Catalepton Carminibus* (Halle, 1910), 37-59.

¹³ Cf. Drew, "Appendix Vergiliana, *Catalepton* XIV," *Class. Phil.* XX (1925), 345-47. Translated into verse by T. H. Warren, *The Death of Virgil*: Oxford, Blackwell (1907), vss. 756-73.

Vergil's achievements in verse. But within hardly more than half a century after the poet's death this epyllium in mock-heroic style is generally accepted in literary circles as an extremely youthful effort of Vergil's. At this time the poets Statius, Lucan, and Martial were evidently convinced that the poem was a product of Vergil's precocious genius. Conservative modern scholars can find support for their skepticism only in the internal evidence of diction, meter, and style; and their arguments are often easily countered by the fact that the poet's immaturity explains any divergences from his later practice.

Whatever the issue, the poem¹⁴ is a significant symptom of an age in which slavish adherence to the themes and style of late Greek poetry threatened to Grecize the Latin language and to inhibit the free development of Roman material in forms of verse that were necessarily Greek in origin. It antedates the patriotic reaction against such tendencies which found expression later in Vergil's *Aeneid* and in much of Horace's work. It is, in brief, redolent of the atmosphere that Valerius Cato, Helvius Cinna, and even Catullus himself in some of his longer poems breathed and exhaled in the first half of the century.

The poem is dedicated to a *puer*, called Octavius and dignified by the epithets *sanctus* and *venerandus*. The *Life* by Donatus, in most of the manuscripts, states that Vergil wrote the poem at the age of sixteen. Octavius, the future Octavian and Augustus, would have been nine years old at that time and rather young to be thus addressed. By juggling with the Roman numeral *xvi*, and emending it to *xxi* or *xxvi*, modern scholars facilitate identification of Octavius with Augustus and justify the epithets *sanctus* and *venerandus* by a reference to Augustus' early entrance to the priesthood. Early intimacy between Vergil and Augustus is somewhat feebly supported by the Bernese *Life*, which declares

¹⁴ The commentary of Leo on the *Culex* (1891), written in Latin, is a masterpiece; also edited, with commentary in French, by Plésent (1910). Special studies in English by Jackson, "The Authorship of the *Culex*," *Class. Quart.* v (1911), 163-74; Hardie, "The *Culex*," *Class. Quart.* xiv (1920), 23-38; Shipley, "Ovidian Vocabulary and the *Culex* Question," *Trans. Amer. Phil. Assoc.* LVII (1926), 261-74; and Drew, *Culex*: Oxford, Blackwell (1925).

that both of them studied under the orator Epidius when Vergil first arrived in Rome. Other modern scholars, retaining the numeral *xvi*, prefer to identify Octavius with the Octavius Musa of *Catalepton* iv and xi, and observe that the epithets, *sanctus* and *venerandus*, elsewhere in Vergil are used as affectionate terms without any connotation of religious sanctity.

A herdsman, falling asleep, is threatened by a snake. A gnat opportunely wakens the herdsman and saves his life. The herdsman kills both serpent and gnat, unaware of the latter's service. The gnat visits the shepherd in a dream and recounts his painful experiences in the lower world. Formal burial rewards the gnat, belatedly, for its intervention. This eccentric and whimsical theme, so trivial in nature and humorously elevated to the plane of epic by solemn and stately diction and lavish rhetorical ornament, is characteristic of the vagaries of late Greek poetry. In structure, also, Hellenistic mannerisms are patent. A dedication to Octavius and an elaborate invocation of appropriate divinities precede the narrative. The story itself, simple as it is, occupies several hundred verses, in which, as is usual in the products of late Greek art, the few facts pertinent to the action are briefly dismissed and picturesque and emotional features are treated with profusion of detail. The mere mention of the grove in which the herdsman falls asleep prompts an elaborate digressory description. The grove is located in Greece, not in Italy. The trees are duly listed, and their associations with mythical tales often noted. The introduction of the herdsman similarly stimulates a lengthy digression on the joys of rural life. And the gnat's description of the underworld is of disproportionate length.

In the material, however, there is often comfort for the liberal critics of the Vergilian *Appendix*. Internal evidence to some degree supports the view of advocates of Vergil's authorship of the *Culex*. The appreciation of country life may well be the youthful fervor of the author of the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, and the structural scheme of the opening sentence of the description (vss. 58-75) is precisely that of the beginning of the famous

O fortunatos nimium sua si bona norint

of the *Georgics* (II, 458), which in similar spirit and phrasing contrasts the life of the farmer and of the degenerate denizen of the city. The gnat's description of the underworld may well be a youthful exercise that was later dignified and ennobled in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*; and especially striking is the inclusion of a brief list of Roman heroes in the account of the inhabitants of Hades, possibly an embryo that matured in the eloquent muster-roll of Anchises. The phraseology of the poem frequently echoes Catullus and Lucretius, and Vergil himself is peculiarly prone to quote and remodel these poets of his youth.

Against such anticipations of Vergil's later interests the skeptics can bring only certain non-Vergilian qualities of style, some of which may be merely marks of the immaturity of a youthful Vergil. The author of the *Culex* bungles badly; he says badly what he has to say, and some will always doubt whether such an author could have written, only a dozen years later, in the lucid style of the *Eclogues*. The vocabulary of the poem is reported to be Ovidian, rather than Vergilian. The writer has various idiosyncrasies; present participles abound, and especially present participles with purely adjectival force.

All such minute consideration of internal evidence by modern scholars often seems to a detached onlooker as a veritable game of battledore and shuttlecock. The expert in metric¹⁵ dilates on trochaic caesuras or hephthemimeral caesuras, and immediately a brother-expert rises to observe that caesuras of no significance have been wrongly included in the evidence, and sooner or later somebody is sure to emerge with a contention that caesuras in general are without the significance attached to them by students of metric. An elaborate study of the vocabulary¹⁶ of the disputed poems with the vocabulary of Vergil himself and of other poets

¹⁵ In English a metrical study of caesuras in the *Appendix* by Butcher, "The Caesura in Virgil, and Its Bearing on the Authenticity of the Pseudo-Vergiliana," *Class. Quart.* VIII (1914), 123-31. Various phases of meter in the individual poems are studied in dissertations and articles.

¹⁶ Recent survey of the vocabulary of the *Appendix* by Fairclough, "The Poems of the *Appendix Vergiliana*," *Trans. Amer. Phil. Assoc.* LIII (1922), 5-34. Cf. also Shipley, *op. cit.*, and Steele, "Non-Recurrence in Vocabulary as a Test of Authorship," *Phil. Quart.* IV (1925), 267-80.

is quickly met by the obvious objection that one cannot properly compare the vocabulary of the *Copa* with that of any of Vergil's authentic poems, or that a passage of narrative verse cannot fitly be compared with a descriptive passage. And however careful the study of diction, the life-history of each word is almost as complicated as the personality of a human being; and statistics, even when interpreted, sometimes do not reveal the whole truth. Parallel passages which seem to establish or controvert Vergilian authorship are especially deceptive. Which is the original, and which the copy? Or are both from a common source? Vergil often repeats himself, and he often quotes from contemporaries by way of flattering compliment. The whole situation in this respect is wonderfully complex. Bewildered by the variety of opinion, the observer forgets his interest in the problem of authorship and decides to write an essay on the criticism of criteria or on the intricacies of human behavior.

Perhaps none of the poems presents so difficult a problem as the romantic short epic, the *Ciris*.¹⁷ The author in his youth had written a poem on this sentimental legend. Having gone to Athens and engaged in the study of philosophy he later decides to honor his friend, Messalla, and furbishes up his youthful essay for the purpose, apologetically admitting the inferiority of his work and devoutly wishing that a Lucretian epic, worthier of his friend, were within the range of his poetical powers. It is obvious that this unrealized ambition accords with Vergil's philosophical interests and with the eloquent desire expressed at the end of the second book of the *Georgics*; but we know nothing of any early study of philosophy at Athens; and if the author refers to "The Garden" as the scene of his university studies, he can hardly mean Naples, where we know Vergil did study philosophy under Siro, but must mean the school of Epicurus at Athens. Aside

¹⁷ The text, with Latin commentary, edited by Némethy (Budapest, 1909). The ingenious argument of Skutsch in *Aus Vergils Frühzeit* (2 Vols.): Leipzig, Teubner (1901, 1906) in support of Cornelius Gallus as the author gave rise to a long controversy and to a vast number of articles on every phase of the poem, too numerous to mention. A recent study of vocabulary by Thomason, "The *Ciris* and Ovid, a Study of the Language of the Poem," *Class. Phil.* xvii (1923), 239-62 and 334-44.

from the statements in the *Lives* by Donatus and Servius and in the comment of Pseudo-Servius on *Eclogues* vi, 3, there is no external evidence in support of Vergil's authorship.

The poem itself has the Hellenistic features that recur in many of these supposed *divini elementa poetae*. A long prelude intrudes the author himself, his personal interests, as well as the occasion of the poem. The narrative is interrupted by pedantic digressions, and there is the usual disproportionate emphasis on feeling and curious blurring of important stages of action. Scylla, daughter of Nisus, king of Megara, falls in love with Minos, who is attacking Megara; knowing that the safety of the city depends on a red lock of hair on her father's head, Scylla cuts off the lock and betrays her native city, expecting to be carried off by Minos as his bride. Instead he ties her to the end of his ship and sails merrily over the Aegean, leaving her in this uncomfortable position. By divine intervention, she is transformed into the bird called *ciris*. The author reveals a fine psychological sense, sympathetically portraying the timidity of the young girl in her bold adventure. He has due regard to the dramatic structure of action, representing the nurse, Carme, as interfering with Scylla's first attempt against her father and thus retarding the action. He uses the nurse also to provide an inlay within the main story, in which Carme illustrates the earlier perfidy of Minos in his relations with her own daughter. But the long monologue of Scylla suspended from the ship, the poet's guide-book list of the places which the ship passes in its voyage over the ocean, the elaborate account of the metamorphosis itself — all these concluding elements of the poem violate either reasonable probability or the dictates of good taste. Copious rhetorical embellishment decorates the narrative. A Greek poet, Parthenius, Vergil's teacher in Greek, had written a Greek poem on the same theme, and it is quite likely that this work is a Latin version stimulated by him.

In the *Ciris*, more than in any other poem of the *Appendix*, passages appear which are clearly related to passages in Vergil's genuine work. Distinctive phrases, and in a few cases successive verses, are common to the *Ciris* and to the *Eclogues* or *Georgics*.

Obviously Vergil is either repeating himself, or else we have before us imitation or flattering quotation. The controversy over such passages has resulted in great difference of opinion. To my mind one pair of passages (*Eclogues* II, 4f and *Ciris* 207f) is almost conclusive:

*Ibi haec incondita solus
montibus et silvis studio iactabat inani.*

*Vigilumque procul custodia primis
excubias foribus studio iactabat inani.*

In Vergil, *haec . . . iactabat* is normal and lucid Latin; in the *Ciris*, *excubias . . . iactabat* is abnormal and hardly intelligible. And I doubt if Vergil even in his youth could have indulged in such a phrase. The author of the *Ciris* seems to be clumsily imitating Vergil.¹⁸

The joyous flippancy of the poem on the hostess of the tavern¹⁹ (*Copa*) is quite in harmony with the Epicurean studies of the author of the *Ciris*, and equally so with the interests of a Vergil studying under Siro and Philodemus. The *Life* by Servius, but not that by Donatus, cites it as Vergilian, and it is further accredited by a fourth-century grammarian. With the same sensuous enjoyment that Philodemus expresses in his Greek epigrams, mingled with Theocritean coloring, the cabaret girl advertizes to the passing wayfarer the attractions of her tavern and its garden, exercising her lure upon the travel-stained friar with a donkey and urging him to abandon his serious outlook into the future for full enjoyment of the present. Transliterated Greek words conspicuously mark her diction. And the elegiac couplets contain so many phrases paralleled in the elegies of Propertius and apparently appropriated from his work, that the date of composition must be

¹⁸ Némethy, *ad loc.*, emends the text, but there is no variation in the manuscripts. The quarrel over such passages cannot be justly evaluated in any brief survey.

¹⁹ The text, with interpretative critical apparatus, at the end of Leo's edition of the *Culex*. Translation into English verse by K. F. Smith, *Martial the Epigrammatist*: Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press (1920), 170. Recent criticism by Drew, "The *Copa*," *Class. Quart.* xvii (1923), 72-81, and xix (1925), 37-41; Wilamowitz, *Hellenistische Dichtung*: Berlin, Weidmann (1924), II, 311-15.

as late as the end of the decade in which Vergil was engaged upon the *Aeneid*, if not later. Vergil might well have been prompted to flattering quotations of Propertius in return for the elegist's eloquent tribute to him at the end of his second book. But if the present text of the *Copa* is sound, there are mannerisms of style²⁰ difficult to attribute to Vergil in the years just before his death.

If we were sensitive only to poetic values, we might gladly welcome Vergil as the author not only of the *Copa* but of the admirable realistic idyl on the making of a salad, the *Moretum*.²¹ Unlike the other poems, it is not vouched for in the *Lives* either of Donatus or of Servius. A manuscript of late date is said to contain a note stating that Parthenius wrote in Greek a poem on the subject, which Vergil imitated. An obscure Latin poet, Sueius, in the first half of the first century had treated the same theme. With almost photographic exactness and detail, slightly elevating the style by his epic diction and occasionally relieving the prosiness by quiet touches of humor, the author sets forth the early morning activities of a farmer. The farmer rekindles his fire and grinds the grain for his bread. His African servant,

With woolly locks, lips tumid, sable skin,
Wide bosom, udders flaccid, belly thin,
Legs slender, broad and most misshapen feet,
Chapped into chinks and parched with solar heat,

sets the water boiling while he completes the preparation of the bread. While the bread is baking, he gathers the makings of a salad from his garden, calls for pestle and mortar, and mashes up the ingredients. The garlic in the mixture brings tears and a wry face and frequent curses. After his simple breakfast on bread and salad he yokes his steers and starts the day's ploughing,

²⁰ I refer to *formosum tenerae*, "prettily tender," in vs. 33, to the construction of *ista* with *coronato* in vs. 36 if Buecheler is right, and to the interpretation of vs. 4 according to Leo. Examples of bold inner accusatives and of hyperbaton are found also in the *Culex* and the *Moretum*.

²¹ Translated into English verse by William Cowper, from whom the passages above are taken. Recent studies by Todd, "The Authorship of the *Moretum*," *Class. Phil.* xx (1925), 336-40, Douglas, *A Study of the Moretum*: Syracuse, N. Y., privately printed (1929), and Drabkin, *The Copa*: Geneva, N. Y., Humphrey Press (1930).

equipped with puttees and a helmet: so the poet humorously describes his farmer's togs. Appealing as such a theme may have been to the writer of the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* there is no positive evidence that Vergil wrote it.²²

In ancient superstition curses were more effective than they are supposed to be today. A Hellenistic poet, Euphorion, much admired by the Latin poets of Catullus' and Vergil's time, had elevated the theme in his poem, entitled "Curses, or the Cup-thief." A simpler title, "Curses" (*Dirae*), introduces a poem in the *Appendix* in which a farmer, dispossessed of his property by a soldier, visits a series of imprecations upon the usurper. In the poem there is passing allusion to the farmer's sweetheart, Lydia. Merged with the *Dirae* in our manuscripts is another poem, now called *Lydia*, wholly devoted to this sweetheart and marked by somewhat luscious sentimentality. The resemblance of the situation in the *Dirae* to Vergil's own experiences, as attested in his first and ninth *Eclogues* and other ancient testimony, encourages the thought that Vergil may have written the *Dirae*; this belief is strengthened by a few phrases common to the *Dirae* and the two *Eclogues*. The text of the two poems is undeniably corrupt; but, making all allowance for the poor tradition, it is hardly credible that the bungled ideas and expressions in these poems are the work of Vergil at the age of twenty-eight; for the situation makes any earlier date impossible if he is the author.²³

Whether liberals or conservatives are right in their contentions with regard to this perplexing group of poems, whether few or many of the poems are considered to be genuine, the total result is not very important in its contribution to our estimate of Vergil. Without such poems we should plausibly guess that in his youth

²² We cannot believe that Vergil would write *abicit* with a short initial syllable in vs. 96; or that, if he did so, he would immediately follow it with *adicitur* in vs. 99 with a long initial syllable.

²³ The *de qua ambigitur* attached to the mention of the *Aetna* in the *Life* by Donatus, if part of the original text, weakens the earliest evidence of its genuineness. The poem deals with a theory of the formation and eruption of volcanoes. For a stimulating and rare advocacy of Vergil's authorship, cf. Rand, *op. cit.* 155-72. Editions, with commentary by Ellis: Oxford, Clarendon Press (1901), and (in German) by Sudhaus: Leipzig, Teubner (1898).

he was in sympathy with the aims and ideals of Catullus and the other New Poets. And such a guess is immediately confirmed by the ascription of almost any one of the poems to Vergil. Again, if any of them are his work, we are simply strengthened in the conclusion we may safely draw from the *Eclogues*, *Georgics*, and *Aeneid*, that he had one of the most desirable of all human qualities, perfectibility. Our chief doubt of the authenticity of the poems is due to a feeling that such a degree of perfectibility as they posit is almost superhuman.

THE LATER TRADITION OF VERGIL

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Vergil is one of those chosen few of history whose biography may be said, in a very real sense, to begin after their death.¹ During his lifetime appreciation was his, to be sure, from his friends and members of the cultivated circles in which he moved; Horace, Propertius, Augustus himself all bear testimony to the high regard in which as man and poet he was held. Nor to the common crowd was he unknown: his *Eclogues* were recited on the stage (*Vita Donatiana* 26); and on one occasion, when Vergil was present in the theater during a reading of his verses, he was acclaimed as though he were Augustus (Tacitus, *Dialogus de Oratoribus* XIII). It was not, however, until after the publication of the *Aeneid*, a year or so after the poet's death, that he became the voice of his people at their best and won the epithet fittingly applied to him by Petronius (*Satiricon* 118), *Romanus Vergilius*. His *Aeneid* was immediately received as the one perfect expression of all the pure and lofty hopes and ideals which had been implicit in the past of Rome and of which the golden years of Augustus seemed to promise the fulfillment. Such criticism as

¹ The one indispensable book on the tradition of Vergil down to the Renaissance is Comparetti's *Virgil in the Middle Ages*, translated by E. F. M. Bencke: London, Swan, Sonnenschein and Co. (1895, now available only in a photographic reprint by G. E. Stechert, New York City. A second Italian edition appeared in 1908). Cf. also K. F. Smith, "The Later Tradition of Vergil," *Class. Wk.* ix (1916), 178-82 and 185-88; Tunnison, *Master Vergil: Cincinnati*, Robert Clark Co. (1888); Leland, *The Unpublished Legends of Virgil*: London, Macmillan Co. (1899); Warren, *Vergil in Relation to the Place of Rome in the History of Civilization*: Oxford, Basil Blackwell (1921); Mackail, *Virgil and His Meaning to the World of Today* (Our Debt to Greece and Rome Series): Boston, Marshall Jones Co. (1921), 120-41. There are also numerous studies dealing with Vergil's influence upon individual authors and periods, some of which will be cited in the following notes.

was directed against it by literary extremists was lost amid the universal approbation; and the world would perhaps have never heard of the literary quarrel, had not scraps of it found their way into the life of the poet written by Suetonius.

What Vergil as a poet — the beauty of his thought and expression, his dramatic power, his mastery of form and rhythm, his universality — meant to his own world, we can gauge by the influence which he exercised upon succeeding poets and prose writers, many of them men of power and genius. These do him reverence not merely by their direct praise of him but by borrowing from him words, phrases, thoughts, ideas, so that it is difficult to realize what the Latin literary language, above all what Latin poetry, of the later periods would have been had Vergil never lived. When the giants were dead, when poetry was poetry only because it was written in verse form, it is still Vergil who furnishes the material out of which a soulless and tasteless rhetoric fashioned its bizarre patterns. With the breaking of a new dawn, however, in the thirteenth century, Vergil the poet, no less than Vergil the philosopher and Vergil the prophet of Christ, is crowned again. To Dante Vergil is "the glory and light of all poets," his "master and guide," from whom alone he won "that goodly style whereto he owed his honor" (*Inferno* I, 82-87); and Dante, because of the artistic elaboration of his own work and his profound thought clothed in poetic form, saw in Vergil's poetry, as Comparetti² well says, the noblest poetry in the world.

Although the realization among the learned of Vergil's genius as a poet and among the untutored the recognition of his *Aeneid* as the supreme expression of the grandeur and destiny of Rome were the initial impulse in producing the immediate acclaim of Vergil as prince of poets, in the centuries of the decline it was not aesthetic appreciation which gave him his place in the traditions of western life and thought. This was due rather to the position which his poetry came at once to occupy in the schools of grammar and rhetoric and to its relation with Christianity.

The spirit of Christianity, preaching the doctrine of salvation

² Cf. *op. cit.* I, 277, and Vossler, *Mediaeval Culture*, translated by W. C. Lawton: New York, Harcourt, Brace and Co. (1929), II, 195-206.

through faith in revelation, should not have found anything useful in the poetry of the pagan, reflecting as it did a three-fold religion, mythological, civil, and philosophical, the last of which guaranteed to the individual the right of free choice. Strictly speaking, the logic of Tertullian³ was unanswerable: "Beware you who affect a Stoic, Platonic, dialectic Christianity. We do not need to extend our thought, since we have Jesus Christ; we do not need to search further, since we have the Gospel; as long as we believe, nothing else matters." Fortunately for western culture such extreme views could not prevail. Not only on pagan literature rested such culture and education as survived the fall of the Empire and the inroads of the barbarians; not only was it necessary to know pagan literature in order to combat pagan ideas, but these ideas had in many instances gone to make up the synthesis represented by Christianity. Moreover the Augustan Age, chiefly because during it Christ was born and the beginning of Christianity was thus contemporaneous with the beginning of the Empire, became for the Christian a real golden age, foreordained by God. It was the divine far-off event toward which mankind had always been moving and those who came after it gazed back upon it through an aura of glory that never faded. The fact that Vergil lived at this period, and near to the birth of Christ, that he had been the herald of its greatness, and that in the fourth *Eclogue* he had sung of an age of peace to come, of a new race sent down from heaven which a new leader, offspring of the gods, was to lead to its redemption, made it very easy for Christians to accept Vergil, if not as one of them, at least as one who "was not far from the kingdom of God."

By the fourth century this *Eclogue* had come to be accepted by even the most enlightened Christians as a prophecy of Christ, whom the babe of the poem was thought to represent. An interpretation of the *Eclogue* from this point of view we have from the hand of no less a person than the Emperor Constantine himself, who read before a church council a Greek translation⁴ and

³ Cf. *De Praescriptis Haereticorum* vii and *De Spectaculis* xxiii.

⁴ Cf. Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* iv, 32; Kurfess, "Vergils Vierte Ecloge in Kaiser Konstantins Rede," *Jahresb. d. Philol. Vereins zu Berlin* XLVI (1920),

expounded it, seeing in the poem evidence that "God could place the light of his knowledge into the heart of the Sibyl seeress and thus enkindle the spirit of the poet." Thereafter the Sibyl and later Vergil himself are arrayed among the prophets of Christ and as such are often pictured in ecclesiastical art and appear in miracle and mystery plays.

Not the least interesting result of the Christian interpretation of this poem is the connection which it has with the change in the spelling of the poet's name. The correct form of this, there can be no doubt, was *Vergilius*, not *Virgilius*, for this is the spelling attested by the earliest inscriptions on which this *gens* name occurs, by our earliest manuscripts, and by such Greek transliterations as Οὐεργίλιος or βεργίλιος. The form with "i," which in the beginning may have been due to a mere difference in pronunciation, does not begin to appear until the fifth century, and its currency after that date was evidently helped by popular etymology connecting the poet's name with the *virgo* of this poem and with *virga*, "rod" or "stem."

Although this fourth *Eclogue* must have been of the first importance in commending Vergil to the disciples of the new religion, it is clear, also, that the conception, expressed in the *Aeneid*, of imperial Rome as the fulfillment of a divine purpose working out through the ages especially commended it to the Christians of the West, eager to make Rome the capital of a Christian world and the soul of the Church. Since some critics see in the *Gospel* and *Acts* written by St. Luke the earliest evidence of such efforts, an Italian scholar,⁵ pointing out the similarity in dramatic purpose, in design, in narrative technique, between the *Aeneid* and the *Acts*, has maintained that this similarity is due to conscious borrowing by the author of the Christian narrative from the *Aeneid*. It is not possible to prove, however, that the *Aeneid* was familiar to Jewish-Christian circles, whose native

90-96; and on the poem in general the three papers by Mayor, Fowler, and Conway in *Virgil's Messianic Eclogue*: London, Murray (1909), and Norden, *Die Geburt d. Kindes*: Leipzig, Teubner (1924).

⁵ Cf. A. Chiappelli, "Vergilio nel Nuovo Testamento," *Atene e Roma* xxii (1919), 1-13 and 89-98.

speech was Greek, by the time of Hadrian by citing such a prophecy as that contained in the Prologue to Book v of the *Oracula Sibyllina*, for the prophecy here is of such a general nature that it could have been suggested by any number of Greek sources. Nor does it follow necessarily that, because the humble freedman Hermas, writing in Greek his revelations of the future between the years A.D. 100-140, puts them in the mouth of the Sibyl of Cumae, he chooses her because of her position in Vergil's *Aeneid*. Hermas lived near Cumae, and the fame of its prophetess was common property long before he wrote.⁶

If we cannot be sure, therefore, that Vergil's poetry was known to these Christian Greeks of the early centuries, it was from the very first as familiar to Latin Christians as it was to Latin pagans. To some of these Christians, in moments of religious exaltation, his voice seemed to be the Sirens' song moving them to forget that, in reading his verses, they were dying to God⁷ (cf. St. Augustine, *Confessions* I, 13); but at other moments they, and certainly the great majority always, accepted it like the Bible as a voice from heaven. Not only did Christian poets borrow freely from him when writing their epics and, like the pagans, make centos of his verses, but throughout the Roman world many a tombstone, marking the last resting-place of humble layman as well as cleric, bears an inscription made up of words, phrases, whole lines taken from Vergil's poems.⁸ Nothing, indeed, shows more clearly the universality of Vergil's poetry than the frequent quotation of it by these early Christians in times of deepest emotion and distress. St. Jerome, to whom the struggle between the

⁶ On Hermas and his writings, cf. Bigg, *Origins of Christianity*: Oxford, Clarendon Press (1909), and W. J. Wilson, "The Career of the Prophet Hermas," *Harvard Theol. Rev.* xx (1927), 21-62.

⁷ On this general question, cf. Coffin, "The Influence of Vergil on St. Jerome and St. Augustine," *Class. Wk.* xv (1922), 33-41, and Pease, "Jerome and Pagan Literature," *Trans. Am. Philol. Assoc.* I (1919), 150-67.

⁸ Cf. Ilwycz, "Ueber d. Einfluss Vergils auf die *Carmina Latina Epigraphica*," *Wiener Stud.* xI (1918), 68-78 and 134-49, and xLI (1919), 46-51 and 161-66. For interesting examples, cf. Le Blant, *L'Épigraphie Chrétienne en Gaule*: Paris, Leroux (1890), 73; Marruchi, *Christian Epigraphy*, translated by J. A. Willis: Cambridge, University Press (1912), 72; and Buecheler, *Carmina Epigraphica*: Leipzig, Teubner (1921), Nos. 682 and 732.

old order and the new was more real than to most, when he heard in Jerusalem of the capture of Rome by Alaric, expressed his grief⁹ in words that came to him from *Psalms* LXXVIII, 1 and Vergil, *Aeneid* II, 6-369. And to many a man of later times Vergil's words have served as "a symbol of some swelling thought or overmastering emotion, the force and meaning of which they could scarcely define for themselves."¹⁰

At no time, indeed, in lands in which Latin was read and spoken did Vergil's poetry cease to be known, however poorly it may have been understood. There is hardly a mediaeval book which does not contain a direct quotation or reminiscence of his lines, hardly a monastery in the library of which his poems are not listed and in which monks were not busy copying them and making notes upon them.¹¹ And when new nationalities began to arise and new thoughts and feelings to come to expression, whether in Latin or in the vernaculars, it is still Vergil who is master and guide. During the Carolingian period, and again in the fourteenth century, his *Bucolics* led to the rebirth of the pastoral-idyl in which contemporary lords and ladies masquerade under the old Latin names. In the tenth century his *Aeneid* was the inspiration as well as the model for the monk Ekkehard of St. Gall, who in his epic *Waltharius Manu Fortis* glorifies in Latin hexameters, with many a Vergilian reminiscence, the deeds of old Germanic heroes. As a result of the romantic urge in the twelfth century, which was reclothing the heroes of Thebes and Troy in a dress to suit the taste of the times, the *Aeneid* is transformed into the Old French romance, *Énéas*,¹² in which Énéas and

⁹ Cf. *Epistulae* CXXVII, 12, and the oration of St. Ambrose over the young Valentinianus II (*De Obitu Valent.* LXXVIII).

¹⁰ Cf. Sellar, *The Roman Poets, Virgil*: Oxford, Clarendon Press (1908), 422. When Gildersleeve wrote his lovely tribute to Kirby Flower Smith, he too recalled Vergil: "And human sorrows touch the human soul" (*Aeneid* I, 462); cf. *Johns Hopkins Alumni Mag.* VII (1919), 131.

¹¹ Cf. Beedie, "The Ancient Classics in the Mediaeval Libraries," *Speculum* V (1930), 10, and Lindsay and Thompson, *Ancient Lore in Mediaeval Latin Glossaries*: Oxford, University Press (1921).

¹² This poem was edited by Salverdia de Grave in *Bibliotheca Normannica* IV (1892); cf. Faral, *Recherches sur les Sources Latines des Contes et Romans Courtois*: Paris, Laroux (1913), 73-157. For references in the vernacular

Lavinia love at first sight, grow pale and wan, and suffer from their love in the true romantic fashion. If we cannot be sure that the *Aeneid* was known to the author of the English *Beowulf*,¹³ we do know that early English and Irish writers from Gildas and Nennius on, who wrote in Latin, were familiar with Vergil's poetry, that the story of Aeneas influenced the English tradition of Brutus as founder of the British race, and that English poetry, beginning with Chaucer, and the same may be said of the poetry of western Europe beginning with the Renaissance, owes to Vergil an inestimable debt.¹⁴

This widespread familiarity with Vergil's poetry on the part of high and low, pagan and Christian, is due, in part at least, to the position which it occupied in the schools of grammar and rhetoric. In the lower schools children, both in Latin and in Greek¹⁵ communities, began their grammatical and literary studies with Vergil (cf. Quintilian I, 8, 5; St. Augustine, *Confessions* I, 17; Macrobius, *Saturnalia* I, 24, 5), and the walls of Pompeii still bear witness to the schoolboy's propensity to write his new-found knowledge for the public to see.¹⁶ In the higher schools the rhetorical excellences of Vergil's poetry commended it for study by future orators (cf. Tacitus, *Dialogus* xx); comparisons were made between Vergil and Cicero (cf. Macrobius, *Saturn.* v, 1, 1), and the question was debated: *Vergilius orator an poeta*.¹⁷ Inci-

literatures, cf. especially Zappert, "Virgils Fortleben im Mittelalter," *Denkschrift d. Wien. Akad., Philol.-Hist. Klasse*, II (1851), 2.

¹³ Cf. Kläber, "Aeneas u. Beowulf," *Archiv f. d. Stud. d. Neuern Sprachen* cxxvi (1911), 40-48 and 339-59; Chadwick, *The Heroic Age*: Cambridge, University Press (1912), 73-76; and Lawrence, *Beowulf and Epic Tradition*: Cambridge, Harvard University Press (1928), 284-91.

¹⁴ For a general treatment of Vergil's influence on English poetry, cf. Nitche, *Vergil and the English Poets*: New York, Columbia University Press (1919).

¹⁵ Cf. the fragmentary Greek vocabulary for *Aeneid* iv, 659 to v, 6 in *Oxyr. Papyri* VIII (1906), No. 1099, and Moore, "Latin Exercises from a Greek Schoolroom," *Class. Phil.* xix (1924), 319-21. For two similar fragments, containing translations of Vergil into Greek, cf. Lowe, *Class. Rev.* xxxvi (1922), 154f.

¹⁶ Cf. the inscriptions collected by Mau, *Corpus Inscript. Lat., Supplem.* II; and Sandys, *Latin Epigraphy*²: Cambridge, University Press (1927), 188.

¹⁷ Cf. the fragment with this title in Florus, p. 183 (Rossbach), Servius ad

dents of his life, many of them fictitious, and themes from his poetry, especially the Dido episode, were adapted for exercises in these schools and furnished subjects for *declamationes* in both prose and verse. By the time Christianity took over education, Vergil's position was so firmly established that the efforts of zealots, if indeed these efforts were ever more than half-hearted, to banish him proved ineffective; and no great change was made in the time-honored methods and principles of instruction.¹⁸ Hence we have from the pen of Ennodius, Bishop of Pavia during the first part of the sixth century, a collection (*Dictiones*) of school *controversiae* and *suasoriae*, which are similar to those in use in pagan schools four hundred years before; among them is a prose declamation on the subject of *Aeneid* IV, 365-87, *verba Didonis cum abeuntem videret Aeneam*. Evidences of this use of Vergil as a quarry for school exercises appear all the way down. Among the most famous examples is one, written during the eighth or ninth century, which represents the soliloquy of Augustus, debating whether he should burn the *Aeneid*.¹⁹

This position of Vergil in the schools naturally resulted in many editions of his works, evidences of which can be traced down through the centuries, and made commentaries on them necessary.²⁰ Since the excellence of Vergil's Latin had very early (cf. Seneca, *Epistles* CVIII; Quintilian I, 5, 35) given him the place of authority on questions of grammatical usage and

Aen. x, 18, and St. Augustine, *Confessions* I, 17. In order to emphasize the supremacy of Vergil as a rhetorician, Tiberius Claudius Donatus wrote at the end of the fourth century his *Interpretationes Vergilianae* (edited by Georgii, Teubner, 1905).

¹⁸ On this topic, cf. Roger, *L'Enseignement des Lettres Classiques d'Ausone à Alcuin*: Paris, Picard (1905), 178 and notes.

¹⁹ In Riese, *Anthologia Latina*: Leipzig, Teubner (1906), No. 672, and Baldwin, *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic*: New York, Macmillan Co. (1928), 129.

²⁰ For evidences of editions during the seventh and eighth centuries, cf. Dall, *Class. Quart.* XII (1918), 171-78, and XVII (1923), 200f. For the commentaries, of which that by Servius is the most important, cf. Rand, "Is Donatus's Commentary on Vergil Lost?", *Class. Quart.* x (1916), 158-64; and Savage, "The Scholia in the Virgil of Tours, Bernensis 165," *Harvard Stud.* XXXVI (1925), 91-164, and "Notes on Some Unpublished Scholia in a Paris Manuscript of Virgil," *Trans. Am. Philol. Assoc.* LVI (1925), 229-41.

since his judicious use of the flowers of rhetoric made him the model of rhetoricians, in these commentaries, and in works closely allied to them, such as the *Noctes Atticae* of Gellius, and the *Saturnalia* of Macrobius, he is represented as the supreme type of the grammarian and rhetorician. His very name was adopted by that strange figure known to the world as Vergilius Grammaticus, whose curious and stupid fancies, because of the authority of his name, are cited with the same reverence as the statements of Donatus and Priscian. Hence it is that in the romance of Dolopathos, a version of the Seven Sages by John of Alta Silva in the thirteenth century, Vergil, the master professor, plays the leading rôle.

Since, too, it had long been the custom among schoolmen when dealing with older authors to find authority for popular beliefs and to interpret by means of allegory what was not understood or what was unpalatable, these teachers of Vergil sought in his verses for meanings of the deepest philosophic import. The extremes to which this *interpretatio per allegoriam* went are seen in the work of Fulgentius,²¹ *Expositio Vergilianae Continentiae Secundum Philosophos Moralis*. In this strange essay the author represents Vergil, whom he makes a proud and gloomy figure, as appearing to him and expounding the inner meaning of the *Aeneid*, which, he declares, sets forth *pleniorrem humanae vitae statum*. This book of Fulgentius was immensely popular throughout the Middle Ages, and the interpretation of the *Aeneid* which he gives, as an allegory of the human soul, turns up in Dante (although he strips the allegory of the puerilities of Fulgentius and, in the *Divine Comedy* especially, glorifies it), in Petrarch, in John of Salisbury, in the commentaries on the *Aeneid* of the learned Christoforo Landino (d. 1504), and, under a different form, in Warburton's *Divine Legation of Moses*. Nor is this method of interpretation unknown among us today; an English scholar²² writes *The Allegory of the Aeneid*, in which he finds the poem to be

²¹ Cf. Coffin, "Allegorical Interpretation of Vergil with Special Reference to Fulgentius," *Class. Wk.* xv (1921), 33-35.

²² D. L. Drew: Oxford, Basil Blackwell (1927).

an allegory of the social and political conditions of the poet's time.

Such an exalted opinion of the wisdom of Vergil led very early to the practice of consulting his works, just as the Bible was consulted, for foreknowledge of the future (*sortes Vergilianae*); the questioner opened his Vergil at random, and the first line on which his eye fell was accepted as the answer to his query. The Emperor Hadrian, when worried about Trajan's attitude toward him, consulted the *sortes* and opened the book to *Aeneid* vi, 808-12. In late years, too, this method of divination has been tried with equally interesting results.²³

Vergil the omniscient sage became the subject of a multitude of popular legends which were current at an early date, no doubt, in Naples, where the poet spent part of his life and where, tradition said, he was buried, but which do not get into literature until the twelfth century, when travelers from other lands wrote them down. In these earlier legends Vergil is always the kindly, beneficent protector of the city he loved in life, and his name was associated with various talismans which he, owing to his power as mathematician and astrologer, had constructed for the public good. Among them, e.g., was a huge figure of a man with bow and arrow ready on the string, which pointed toward Vesuvius and prevented its eruption. When these stories spread beyond Naples, as they very quickly did, Vergil's name became attached to various marvelous monuments elsewhere, especially of course at Rome. Here among other wonders for which he was responsible was a beautiful palace, the *Salvatio Romae*, in which were statues representative of the various subject provinces, each with a bell in its hand; whenever any province planned revolt, its statue rang the bell. Inevitably, too, when the legends became dissociated from Naples, where local patriotism retained the memory of the good Vergil, he became a magician, the master of the black art, a development aided no doubt by the knowledge of magic displayed in the eighth *Eclogue*; and his name is associated with

²³ Cf. Slater, *Sortes Vergilianae*: Oxford, Basil Blackwell (1922), and Helen A. Loane, "The Sortes Vergilianae," *Class. Wk.* xxi (1928), 185-89.

divers adventures, especially those with women. In these the poet often appears, as in the story of his love affair with the daughter of the Emperor of Rome, in a very ridiculous light and becomes, along with David, Samson, and Aristotle, an example of the futility of man's wisdom when matched against woman's wit.

In this story of Vergil through the ages he plays almost every part (master-grammarians, scholar, philosopher, prophet, magician, lover) other than that of poet. It is as a poet, however, that the modern world acclaims him, "the chastest and the royallest poet," as Bacon described him, that to the memory of man is known, and the author, to use the words of an American critic,²⁴ of perhaps the greatest single book ever written by man. To the poet's tomb thousands during this year will make a pilgrimage, actuated, one may hope, by the spirit of love and reverence for his commanding genius which led Silius Italicus to visit it as holy ground and inspired Boccaccio, when, as a youth of twenty, he sought refuge there from the annoyances of Naples, to devote his life to letters.²⁵

²⁴ Cf. Woodberry, *Literary Essays*: New York, Harcourt, Brace and Howe (1920), 233.

²⁵ Cf. Osgood, "Boccaccio's Knowledge of the Life of Vergil," *Class. Phil.* xxv (1930), 35.

THE INFLUENCE OF VIRGIL UPON THE FORMS OF ENGLISH VERSE

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It is at least a striking tribute to the enduring value of Virgil's poetic art that the present Poet Laureate of England has chosen it for special study and has made an interesting experiment in presenting the impressive vision of Aeneas, given in Book VI of the *Aeneid*, in English quantitative hexameters.¹ Dr. Bridges' rendering is thrown into relief by being placed side by side with numerous specimens of earlier renderings in verse and prose, ranging from that of Gawin Douglas of the early sixteenth to Charles J. Billson's of the late nineteenth century, thus illustrating not merely the great variety of attempts that have been made to reproduce Virgil but also the abiding hold that the famous poet has had upon many periods of English literature.

In *Ibant Obscure*, the work to which I have just referred, Dr. Bridges luckily does not contend that "quantitative classical verse should be written in English" but only that, if it is written at all, it should be written under the conditions or limitations as to accent exhibited by Virgil. However reasonable this principle may seem to be, it is not to be wondered at that the result is somewhat disappointing. Indeed, one great authority on English prosody denies that the Laureate's hexameters are English verse or even English rhythm at all.² Professor Saintsbury's verdict, however, is surely too sweeping, for a more sympathetic perusal of the rendering convinces us that many of the English verses not

¹ Cf. Robert Bridges, *Ibant Obscure*, an Experiment in the Classical Hexameter: Oxford, Clarendon Press (1916). Dr. Bridges has died since this article was set up.

² Cf. George Saintsbury, *History of English Prosody*: New York, Macmillan Co. (1906), III, 434.

merely echo the beauty of the original Latin but are in themselves very rhythmical and readable. Take, e.g., the wonderful picture of the multitude of ghosts, as they crowd about Charon:

Countless as | in the for|est, at a | first white | frosting of | autumn
Sere leaves fall to the ground; or like whenas over the ocean
Myriad birds come thickly flocking, when wintry December
Drives them a|far south|ward for | shelter up|on sun|nier shores,
So thronged they [vss. 309-13].

Yet not all parts of the version are as smooth as this, and one may well suspect that the *Ibant Obscuri* rendering is a mere *tour de force* and that the quantitative hexameter is after all an exotic growth, which does not thrive in the soil of English verse. Even the lines cited contain strange licenses, for if we adhere to a strictly classical model, "fórest" becomes "forést," and "sunnier" a dissyllable, the fifth foot being spondaic. Some lines in the version resolve themselves readily into other meters. Thus

But the súl|len boat|man toók | now one | now óther | at will [vs. 315]
is essentially iambic, and the two lines

While sóme | from the riv | er forbáde | he, an' drave | to a dis|tance
[vs. 316]

and

Whence cán | such unrú|ly desíre, | Palinu|rus, assáil | thee? [vs. 373]
are more anapaestic than dactylic.

Indeed, no attempts to domesticate the Virgilian hexameter in English have ever been really successful. As early as the time of Elizabeth, the circle known as the Areopagus, who fought against the use of rhyme and urged the claims of classical meters, found a sorry representative in Richard Stanyhurst, whose rendering of *The First Foure Books of Virgil his Aeneis*, published in 1582, is an absurd curiosity of literature and was very properly ridiculed by Thomas Nash in his parody:

Then did he make heaven's vault to rebounde with rounce robbie hobble
Of ruffe raffe roaring, with thwick thwack thurlery bouncing.

Stanyhurst's failure may have weakened the quantitative cause; but any lingering allegiance to it was doubtless annihilated by the

criticisms of the two sixteenth-century poets, Samuel Daniel of Oxford and Thomas Campian of Cambridge, who, though opposed to each other on the question of rhyme, were agreed as to the folly of foisting the classical hexameter into English. The heresy was revived in 1737, when the anonymous author of *An Introduction of the Ancient Greek and Latin Measures into British Poetry* recommends such a scansion as "In Syri|an Pas|tures," and such a hexameter as

A De|ity | gave us this | leisure, | O Meli|boeus.

At the close of the eighteenth century, under German influence, accentual, rather than quantitative, hexameters came into vogue. Coleridge trifled with them, and everybody knows his description of the elegiac couplet:

In the hexameter rises the fountain's silvery column,
In the pentameter aye falling in melody back.

Southey, who was very anxious to imitate the Virgilian hexameter, gave up the idea of "looking for quantity where emphasis only ought to be expected"; and inasmuch as there is not (so he claimed) "a single instance of a genuine native spondee" in English, he substituted trochees for spondees and advocated "the license of not beginning every line with a long syllable." Needless to say, these changes convert the dactylic into a different kind of meter, for though *A Vision of Judgement* opens with a hexameter,

"Twas at that sober hour when the light of day is receding,
it is not dactylic, for "sober" and "light of" are neither dactyls nor spondees, but trochees; and if you begin a line with a short syllable, you run at once into either iambs or anapaests.

It was in America that these modified hexameters were cultivated with the greatest success, for the poet whom Edmund Clarence Stedman calls "the New World counterpart of Virgil," has used the form in several of his poems. Longfellow's *To The Driving Cloud* begins thus:

Gloomy and dark art thou, O Chief of the mighty Onfahas,
Gloomy and dark as the driving cloud, whose name thou hast taken!

In 1841 appeared *The Children of the Lord's Supper*, some of whose lines are extremely melodious, e.g.:

Hark! then roll forth at once the mighty tones of the organ,
Hover like voices from God, aloft like invisible spirits.

The success of this poem led the author six years later to employ the same measure in a long narrative poem. "The English world," he writes in the Preface to *Evangeline*, "is not yet awake to the beauty of that meter." *Evangeline* at once leaped into favor, and of all hexametrical poems in English it still remains the most popular. Everybody knows the opening lines:

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.

Evangeline was followed by *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, in which, according to Horace E. Scudder, Longfellow's editor, "The hexameter verse differs in its general effect from that produced by the more stately form used in *Evangeline* through its greater elasticity. A crispness of touch is gained by a more varying accent and a freer use of trochees." That even Longfellow regarded his hexameter as an intruder into English verse is clear from his prefatory note to poems "From the Swedish and Danish," in which he writes of "that inexorable hexameter, in which, it must be confessed, the motions of the English muse are not unlike those of the prisoner dancing to the music of his chains, and perhaps, as Dr. Johnson said of the dancing dog, 'The wonder is not that she should do it so well, but that she should do it at all.'"

All these hexametrical poems of Longfellow's caught the popular fancy, partly because they are metrically successful, and partly, we may well believe, because their measure was reminiscent of an ancient author very familiar to all who had had more than a common-school education. Virgil's hexameters have generally, though of course incorrectly, been read by English-speaking people in a purely accentual way, and in Longfellow's day such a line as

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks
must at once have reminded Virgilian students of

Arma virúmque canó, Troiaé qui prímus ab óris,

a line in which, as it happens, ictus and accent coincide in four, if not five, of the six feet.³

But the most casual students of Latin must recognize one fundamental difference between the ancient and modern lines, viz. that the latter are almost devoid of spondees and have trochees to take their place. Thus, in such a verse as *Evangeline* II, v, 97,

That the | dying | heard it and | started | up from their | pillows,
the first, second, and fourth feet are all trochees, not spondees, and therefore not correct equivalents for dactyls. Further, these accentual dactyls commonly lend themselves to an anapaestic reading, for the anapaest is a far more characteristic foot in English than the dactyl, and it is just as easy to read the line last cited as

That the dy|ing heard | it and star|ted up | from their pil|lows.

Here the syllable "dy" is the first one to be strongly stressed, and so we get an alternation of anapaests and iambs in our supposedly dactylic line.

A year after the appearance of *Evangeline*, Arthur Hugh Clough published *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*. That the poet had Virgil before him as he wrote is to be inferred from the fact that both the poem as a whole and six of its nine parts are introduced by Latin citations from the *Eclogues* and the *Aeneid*. Clough gets more spondees and spondaic endings into his hexameters than Longfellow, and he even imitates Virgilian elision, as in

Dearest Lou|is(a), how de|lightful to bring young people together;
but even he occasionally runs into anapaests, as in

For the post|man made out | he was heir | to the earl|dom of I|lay,

³ *Troiae-qui* is perhaps a word-group, in which the relative is treated like an enclitic, without accent.

and he cannot avoid the trochaic substitute for the spondee, as in the second and fourth feet of the verse:

Being the | younger | son of the | younger | brother, the | Colonel.

Kingsley's *Andromeda* is metrically in the same class with *Evangeline*; but Kingsley rejected Longfellow's trochees and in his beautiful verse gives us a measure which is much too dactylic to represent either Virgil or Homer and which, as Saintsbury shows, falls easily into an anapaestic mold, having anacrusis and a hypermetric syllable. Thus

O|ver the moun|tain aloft | ran a rush | and a roll | and a roar|ing
Down|ward the breeze | came malig|nant and leapt | with a howl | to the
water,
Roar|ing in cran|ny and crag | till the pil|lars and clefts | of the ba|salt
Rang | like a god-|swept lyre.

Swinburne, who improved even on Kingsley in this measure, recognized the fact that English is "a language to which all variations and combinations of anapaestic, iambic, or trochaic meter are as natural and pliable as all dactylic and spondaic forms of verse are unnatural and abhorrent." His hexameters, therefore, however dactylic in appearance, sooner or later reveal their anapaestic basis. Thus *Hesperia* closes with this couplet:

And our spir|its too burn | as we bound, | thine ho|ly but mine | heavy-
la|den,
As we burn | with the fire | of our flight; | ah love | shall we win | at the
last?

and *Evening on the Broads* with the following:

But a sense | of the sound | of it al|way, a spir|it unsleep|ing and death-|
less,
Ghost or | God, ever|more || moves on the | face of the | deep.

This last line is, of course, a pentameter.

Treated in this anapaestic fashion, hexameters are very musical; but Walter Savage Landor probably expressed the general verdict of contemporary poets as to those of the genuine dactylic type, when he said that "English and German hexameters sound as a heavy cart sounds, bouncing over boulders." It is instructive,

however, to recall here the fact that the *Gebir* was for the most part written first in Latin hexameters, which Landor could wield with perfect freedom. Thus the fine lines

It remembers its august abodes
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there

were first written in the hexameter form thus:

*Veteres reminiscitur aedes,
Oceanusque suus quo murmure murmurat ille.*

Browning essayed hexameters in *Abt Vogler*, but it is interesting to observe how his elegiac couplets (with the catalectic hexameter), such as

Would that the structure brave, the manifold music I build
Bidding my organ obey, calling its keys to their work,

pass into anapaestic form as the poem proceeds:

Why else was the pause prolonged but that singing might issue thence?
Why rushed the discords in, but that harmony should be prized?

Tennyson, though the most Virgilian of English poets and thoroughly enamored of Virgilian verse, had no high opinion of English hexameters:

These lame hexameters the strong-winged music of Homer?
No, but a most burlesque, barbarous experiment.

He realized that a good versifier could turn them out with fatal facility, and we are told that, "walking along the terrace of Aldworth with its splendid view, and talking of English hexameters, he rolled out three or four lines, beginning:

Aldworth that stands on the height o'erlooking the woods and the
champain,

continuing, 'I could go on for ever like that, but what is its worth?' " ⁴

⁴ Cf. H. D. Rawnsley, *Memories of the Tennysons*: Glasgow, MacLehose (1900), 142.

This general condemnation of English hexameters, both quantitative and accentual, naturally leads to the question, What is the best vehicle for presenting Virgil in English verse? Mr. Frank Richards, the latest versifier of the *Aeneid*, reminds us of thirty-seven other English verse renderings.⁵ Of this total of thirty-eight, to include his own, only two are in hexameters, eighteen are in blank verse, and the remaining eighteen embrace such varieties as the heroic couplet, the Spenserian stanza, octosyllabics, rhymed fiftens, and the rhymed ballad fourteens used by Boulton and William Morris. Both the very short- and the very long-line renderings are spirited and poetical, but completely devoid of the dignity and impressiveness of Virgil. The Spenserian stanza, though used with no little success by Fairfax Taylor, as well as by Worsley in his translation of the *Iliad*, is too difficult a system to be maintained through a long poem; and Conington, who completed Worsley's rendering, speaks of the labor of finding four similar sounds as very considerable. "I have," he continues, "a constant sense of twisting and torturing the language, which a translator of Homer, I take it, ought not to have."

There remain two varieties deserving of special consideration, viz. the heroic couplet and blank verse, both of which have played a most important part in the history of English poetry.

The heroic couplet, which appears in English literature as early as Chaucer, consists of a pair of rhymed decasyllabics, a measure closely allied to the old Italian line of eleven syllables, of which Dante once said that it "seems the stateliest and most excellent as well by reason of the length of time it occupies as of the extent of subject, construction, and language of which it is capable." The line of ten syllables, in fact, has proved its worth in the history of blank verse as well as in the heroic couplet.

This couplet was first used to any extent in 1513 by Gawin Douglas in his vigorous translation of the *Aeneid*. It was later

⁵ Cf. Frank Richards, *The Aeneid of Virgil*, translated with an Introductory Essay: London, Murray (1928). The renderings are those given in selections by Dr. Bridges in *Ibant Obscure*. It is a pity that Harlan H. Ballard's, one of the best American versions (Scribners, 1911), is not included.

employed by Spenser in *Mother Hubbard's Tale*, and by Cowley in his epic, the *Davideis*, which, written in twelve books, opens in true Virgilian fashion:

I sing the man who Judah's scepter bore
In that right hand which held the Crook before . . .
Much danger first, much toil did he sustain,
Whilst Saul and Hell crost his strong fate in vain.

Cowley, indeed, goes so far in his imitation of Virgil as to exhibit half-lines. But the chief figure in the earlier history of the couplet is John Dryden, who used it in his dramas, in *The Hind and Panther*, and finally in his translation of the works of Virgil, which appeared in 1697.

Dryden was an immense admirer of Virgil. In his Preface to *Annu Mirabilis*, published over thirty years before the Virgil translation and written in decasyllabic quatrains of alternate rhyme, he confesses that Virgil has been his master. "I have followed him everywhere," he writes; "I know not with what success, but I am sure with diligence enough." And in his "Dedication of the *Aeneid*," he eulogizes the poet who

is everywhere elegant, sweet, and flowing in his hexameters. His words are not only chosen, but the places in which he ranks them for the sound. . . . I have endeavored to follow the example of my master, and am the first Englishman, perhaps, who made it his design to copy him in his numbers, his choice of words, and his placing them for the sweetness of the sound.

And then Dryden goes on to show how well he understood the difference between Latin and English in vocalic and consonantal values, and how thoroughly he had studied the rhythms of his Latin original and so endeavored to get corresponding effects in English. The poet, he continues,

must know the nature of the vowels—which are more sonorous, and which more soft and sweet—and so dispose them as his present occasions require: all which, and a thousand secrets of versification beside, he may learn from Virgil, if he will take him for his guide. . . . My chief ambition [he concludes] is to please those readers who have dis-

cernment enough to prefer Virgil before any other poet in the Latin tongue.

Dryden's translation of Virgil was a pronounced success. Edmund Gosse remarks⁶ that though "Dryden's touch was not delicate enough to reproduce Virgil's best effects," yet "on the whole it may be securely said that no more satisfactory translation, as English poetry, has ever been produced."

Moreover, the influence of Dryden on later English literature has been enormous. He was idolized by Pope, who once said to Spence: "I learned versification wholly from Dryden's works" and who also, in his *Temple of Fame*, sets Virgil on a column:

On which a shrine of purest gold was reared:
Finished the whole, and labour'd every part,
In patient touches of unwearied art.

Dryden and Pope were studied closely by Keats, who used the heroic couplet in his *Endymion* and *Lamia* and who in his turn has been one of the chief inspirations of later poets, so that indirectly, even when not directly, the power of Virgil has extended over practically the whole field of modern English verse.

But as Mr. Frank Richards says, it is not the heroic couplet, but blank verse that "has proved the one effective vehicle of epic movement in English."⁷ It is quite unnecessary here to go into the old controversy about the use of rhyme, though it is interesting to recall the fact that, in *The State of Innocence and Fall of Man*, written in 1674, Dryden attempted to prove the inferiority of blank verse by turning part of *Paradise Lost* into rhyme. However, in the very next year, as we learn from the prologue to *Aureng-Zebe*, he confesses to a distaste for rhyme; and in 1678, in *All for Love or The World Well Lost*, he abandoned rhyme in tragedy.

⁶ Cf. Edmund Gosse, *A History of Eighteenth Century Literature*: London, Macmillan (1889), 22.

⁷ So, too, after citing some verses from Milton, Tennyson said: "If Virgil is to be translated, it ought to be in this elaborate kind of blank verse." Cf. *Alfred, Lord Tennyson, a Memoir by His Son*: London, Macmillan Co. (1897), II, 414; cited hereafter in this article as *Memoir*.

As the first important example of the heroic couplet in English was furnished by a rendering of Virgil, so the first example of English blank verse is to be found in the Earl of Surrey's translation of the second and fourth books of the *Aeneid*, made toward the end of the reign of Henry VIII. As is to be expected, Surrey's verse, while stilted and monotonous, is a distinct improvement on Gawin Douglas. In 1562, with the *Gorboduc* of Sackville and Norton, blank verse entered, so to speak, upon its dramatic career, which culminated in Shakespeare, who, however, had at first, as in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, tried rhyme. After Shakespeare the measure suffered a decline and lost its restraint, vigor, and nobility; but these qualities were restored in the epic, as handled by John Milton, who "introduces into it the order, proportion, and finish which dramatic blank verse had then lost and which it has hardly since recovered."⁸

Milton's blank verse, as seen in *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*, displays an extraordinary perfection of technique. He is constantly varying the stress, inverting the rhythm, and changing the verse-breaks to accord with the thought expressed. By this constant variety he banishes monotony and dullness, and indeed his skill in ringing all the possible changes of rhythm has never been surpassed. Though blank verse has been freely used by great poets in the centuries following, no essential improvement has ever been made upon Milton's technique.

Milton was one of the best classical scholars of his age. He wrote both Greek and Latin verse with ease, and a mere glance at his poems in these tongues will suffice to make clear the fact that he was familiar with Homer and the Greek tragedians, as well as with Catullus, Virgil, Horace, and the Roman elegists. In such Latin hexameters as his poems *In Quintum Novembris*, *Ad Patrem*, *Mansus*, and *Epitaphium Damonis* he is perfectly at home in the Virgilian measure, and numerous turns of expression are reminiscent of the Virgilian poems.

As to his great epic, *Paradise Lost*, the influence of both Homer

⁸ Cf. Saintsbury, *op. cit.* II, 208.

and Virgil is writ large across its pages. Addison, it is true, thinks the influence of Homer is greater than that of Virgil, but Addison's verdict would seem to have been reached too hastily. Homer's influence is more or less obvious in almost all later epics, including Milton's; but the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* stand in a class by themselves, and the writer of such a learned epic as *Paradise Lost* would find much more reason for studying a work of the same type, such as the *Aeneid*. Tennyson, himself the most Virgilian of English poets, was impressed by the striking resemblances between Virgil and Milton, and a careful reading of the latter soon brings into relief innumerable evidences of his indebtedness not only to the *Aeneid* but also to the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*. "It is certain," says Dr. Nitchie, "that Milton depended chiefly on the *Aeneid* as the model for the structure of his epic."

As Virgil had attained to the highest perfection of which Latin verse is capable, so his marvelous technique, his exquisite taste in adapting expression to thought, his remarkable variety in pause effects, his ever changing rhythms all appealed to such a kindred spirit as Milton's; and while Homer undoubtedly supplied a model for *Paradise Lost* as a whole, as indeed he had done for the *Aeneid*, and while many of Milton's similes are suggested by the *Iliad*, yet it is mainly from Virgil that Milton learned his fine phrasing, his variety of clause, his caesural changes, his paragraph structure, his appreciation of vocalic and consonantal values, his allusiveness, and his artistic use of majestic proper names — in a word, a large number of the features that characterize his splendid verse. Saintsbury assumes that Milton's chief teacher in verse-technique was Shakespeare, and this is true, so far as his English models are concerned; but Milton had a much wider outlook than merely English literature afforded, and Virgil was one of his great teachers.

As Saintsbury points out, "Milton is about the first" English writer "to give the correct quantification to Latin words," and it is doubtless his familiarity with classic metrical usage that made him the first of our nondramatic poets to use the spondee freely in his verses. Thus in *Sonnet VIII* he writes:

Whatever clime the Sun's *bright circle* warms;
in *Il Penseroso*:

Or that *starr'd* *Ethiope* Queen that strove,
and in *Paradise Lost*:

Of Man's *First Disobedience* and the Fruit;

where, in each case, the obvious spondee takes the place of the normal iambus.

Similarly, Milton is fond of trisyllabic feet. Thus "the mel-|lowing year|," and "melo|dious tear|" in *Lycidas*; "Cimmer|ian des|ert" in *L'Allegro*; "thy o|dorous lamp|" in *Sonnet 1x*; and "Disobe|dience and|" and "Glo|ry above | his Peers" in *Paradise Lost*.

A careful comparison of any important paragraph in the *Georgics* or *Aeneid* with one of like length in *Paradise Lost* will show much similarity in the variety and distribution of sense pauses. Moreover, there is one peculiarity of Virgil's versification which seems to have influenced Milton to a large extent, and that is Virgil's habit of running beyond a line so as to include in his sentence the first foot of the following verse. This foot is usually a dactyl, as in *Georgics* 1, 326, 332, and 333, but is occasionally an impressive spondee, as in

Vox quoque per lucos volgo exaudita silentis
ingens [*Georgics* 1, 476f],

and

Ibat ovans divumque sibi poscebat honorem
demens! [*Aeneid* vi, 589f].

With the spondee and pause we may compare such lines in Milton as

He must not flote upon his watry bear
Unwept [*Lycidas* 13f].
Which men call Earth, and with low-thoughted care
Confin'd [*Comus* 6f].
Distends with pride, and hardning in his strength

Glories [*Paradise Lost* I, 572f].

O Myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers

Matchless [*ibid.* I, 622f].

Thus they relate,

Erring [*ibid.* I, 746f].

It may be observed that in the last three instances the accent of the English disyllable coincides with that of the Latin parallels. Examples of cases where the English foot is divided between two words are common enough, as in

This said he paus'd not, but with ventrous Arme

He pluck't [*Paradise Lost* v, 64f].

Another feature in which Milton shows kinship with the Latin poet is in the artistic and impressive use of proper names. Virgil's Corydon sings as once sang

Amphion Dircaeus in Actaeo Aracyntho [*Eclogues* II, 24];

and when Virgil wishes to tell us that the medical art was helpless in time of pestilence, instead of saying with Lucretius (*De Rerum Natura* VI, 1179): *Mussabat tacito Medicina timore*, he writes (*Georgics* III, 549f):

Cessere magistri

Phillyrides Chiron Amythaoniusque Melampus.

But it was in the wonderful handling of personal and geographical names in the seventh *Aeneid* that Milton found an exemplar for his marvellous titles of demon-gods and their shrines. If Milton, as Saintsbury claims, was "the greatest master" of this artistic feature "of adding to the color and enhancing the form" of English verse, it was because he was following in the steps of the Roman "lord of language." Yes; "Milton had evidently studied Virgil's verse," as Tennyson (*Memoir* II, 384) once remarked to President Warren of Magdalen College, Oxford; and when Cowper⁹ compared the music of *Paradise Lost* to "that of a fine organ," thus anticipating the later poet's designation of its author as the

God-gifted organ-voice of England,

⁹ Cf. letter to Unwin dated October 31, 1779.

he very naturally and very logically went on to say that it had never been equaled "unless perhaps by Virgil."

We have dwelt thus at some length upon Virgil's influence on Milton not only because of the intrinsic value of Milton's verse but also because from the point of view of prosody Milton stands beside Shakespeare as one of the greatest figures in the history of English poetry. Milton's blank verse has never been surpassed, and in this field as in others all later poets are greatly indebted to him. Thus through Milton, as through Dryden, Virgil's influence is a stream which passes down all the courses followed by English song.

But this influence is not merely indirect, and perhaps it will be fitting in the short space still available to bring together some of the scattered evidence which can be found to show how potent is the hold which Virgil has had upon most of our great singers. And here, happily, our task is simplified by the admirable book which Dr. Nitchie has written on *Vergil and the English Poets*.¹⁰

Chaucer had a first-hand knowledge of the *Aeneid*, the story of which is represented on the inner wall of his *Hous of Fame*; and in his *Legend of Good Women* the poet pays this tribute to Virgil:

Glory and honour, Virgil Mantuan
Be to thy name! and I shal, as I can,
Follow thy lantern, as thou gost biforn ["Dido," vss. 1-3].

In Chaucer's day and throughout the fifteenth century the influence of Dante was very potent; and Dante's "master and author" and the only source of his "noble style" was Virgil. In the following century there was a renaissance of classical studies, and Virgil became one of the best-known of the ancient writers. The charter of Ipswich School, founded by Cardinal Wolsey, prescribes that the students in their fourth year were to study "Virgil himself, of all poets the chief . . . whose verses should be read with a beautiful sonorous voice, so that their majesty may be better felt." Both Sir Philip Sidney and Edmund Spenser, being university

¹⁰ Cf. Elizabeth Nitchie, *Vergil and the English Poets*: New York, Columbia University Press (1919).

men, were familiar with Virgil. *The Shepherd's Calendar*, which appeared in 1579, is remarkable as showing that, in England, pastoral writers were turning away from the *Eclogues* of Mantuanus and the *Arcadia* of Sannazaro and seeking inspiration in the classic originals of Theocritus and Virgil. From now on the influence of Virgil's *Eclogues* on English pastoral and rural poetry increases in volume and may be detected in a great variety of writers of the later centuries. As for the *Georgics*, though a translation of both *Bucolics* and *Georgics* was published in 1589 by "A. F.," yet, until the eighteenth century, their influence was hardly felt in England but was confined to France and Italy.

Of the Elizabethan dramatists it will suffice to remark that almost all of them were members of one or the other of the two universities; and as to the great exception, Professor Elton well remarks that "even Shakespeare had ample Latin for his purpose." Christopher Marlowe, father of English tragedy and the first writer of English dramatic blank verse, was the author of *The Tragedie of Dido, Queene of Carthage*, a play completed and brought out by Thomas Nash in 1594, a year after Marlowe's death. In the last act, Dido and Aeneas not seldom speak in the very hexameters of the original. Thus

Betwixt this land and that be never league,
Littora littoribus contraria, fluctibus undas
Imprecor; arma armis; pugnent ipsique nepotes;
 Live false Aeneas! truest Dido dies!
Sic, sic juvat ire sub umbras.

Shakespeare reveals a first-hand knowledge of Virgil in several passages, notably in the second Act of *Hamlet*, where the hero's remark, "One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas Aeneas' tale to Dido," is illustrated by a half hundred lines in blank verse. In the *Poetaster*, Ben Jonson translates a portion of the fourth *Aeneid*, and honors his friend Chapman under the name of "Virgil."

In one of Lyttleton's *Dialogues of the Dead* Boileau asks Pope: Who was the poet in Elysium "whom I saw Spenser lead in and present to Virgil as the author of a poem resembling the *Georgics*?" Pope's answer, "Your description points out Thomson,"

implies that Virgil's *Georgics* were the model for the *Seasons*; and indeed Thomson had the greatest admiration for Virgil:

Behold, who yonder comes! in sober state,
Fair, mild, and strong as is a vernal sun:
'Tis Phoebus 'self, or else the Mantuan swain!

[“Winter,” vss. 530-32].

The *Georgics*, to be sure, have always in English literature been what Akenside described as the “faultless model of didactic poetry”; and in this field Miltonic blank verse has almost always been the English equivalent of the Latin hexameter.

In the nineteenth century anybody who could boast of having an education was trained in both Greek and Latin, and Latin verse-writing was a common school exercise. Vergil, the chief model, was therefore known to all educated people; and his beautiful hexameters were very familiar, even if as Coleridge once sneeringly asked: “Take away his diction and meter, and what have you left?” But the diction and meter of Virgil are supremely beautiful and embrace what Churton Collins describes¹¹ as “the tender grace, the pathetic cadences, the subtle verbal mechanism of the most exquisite poet of antiquity.” Wordsworth realized the charm of Virgilian verse when he reread Virgil with his son and then wrote his beautiful *Laodamia*. Cowper, too, was

never weary of the pipe

Of Tityrus.

Byron's first oration at Harrow was from Virgil, and some of the “splendid, rolling rhetoric” of his later verse seems to echo Virgil. Landor could criticize Virgil very severely, but he imitated him none the less and recommended him to younger poets. It was through reading Pindar, Virgil, and Milton, says Elton,¹² that Landor “escaped from eighteenth-century classicism . . . and came towards the true antique”; and it was Virgil “who taught him the heroic way of delineation.” Thus Virgil played a part in the re-creation of the lofty and heroic style which the eighteenth

¹¹ Cf. Churton Collins, *Essays and Studies*, p. 70.

¹² Cf. Oliver Elton, *A Survey of English Literature, 1780-1880*: New York, Macmillan Co. (1920), I, 16.

century had forgotten. He was one of those who could furnish "a staff, a standard, a control"; and with a nobler diction came a nobler vision, for "the study of Virgil, of *Paradise Lost*, of the *Faerie Queene*, releases the poetic perceptions" (*ibid.* p. 29).

Shelley derived his literary and spiritual inspiration mainly from the Greeks; but such a wondrous word-musician as he was must have agreed with Edmund Burke when he said that no painter could express the effect of Virgil's words, *quos ipse sacra-verat ignes*. Thus it is not strange to learn that among the books which were forwarded to him at the Bagni di Lucca was a volume of Virgil's *Georgics*.¹³ As to Keats, "the master-spirit in the evolution of Victorian poetry,"¹⁴ it is worth while recalling that in his schooldays he voluntarily undertook and later completed the task of writing out a translation of the *Aeneid*.¹⁵ Who can overestimate the hold which such a close intimacy with Virgil's stately verse must have had upon the sensitive mind of this lover of beauty and truth?

For there is a magic in Virgil's very words which many a poet has instinctively recognized, and I cannot illustrate this better than by repeating an illuminating story which Edmund Gosse tells in his *Father and Son*:

One evening my father took down his Virgil from an upper shelf, and his thoughts wandered away from surrounding things; he travelled in the past again. The book was a Delphin edition of 1798, which had followed him in all his wanderings; there was a great scratch on the sheepskin cover that a thorn had made in Alabama. And then, in the twilight, as he shut the volume at last, oblivious of my presence, he began to murmur and to chant the adorable verses by memory.

Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi,

he warbled; and I stopped my play, and listened as to a nightingale, till he reached

*Tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra
formosam resonare doces Amaryllida silvas.*

¹³ Cf. Walter Edwin Peck, *Shelley, His Life and Work*: Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co. (1927), II, 73.

¹⁴ Cf. Edmund Gosse, *A Short History of Modern English Literature*: New York, D. Appleton and Co. (1898), 317.

¹⁵ Cf. Amy Lowell, *John Keats*: Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co. (1924), I, 50.

"O papa, what is that?" I could not prevent myself from asking. He translated the verses, he explained their meaning, but his exposition gave me little interest. What to me was beautiful Amaryllis? She and her lovesick Tityrus awakened no image whatever in my mind.

But a miracle had been revealed to me, the incalculable, the amazing beauty which could exist in the sound of verses. My prosodical instinct was awakened . . . Verse, "a breeze mid blossoms playing," as Coleridge says, descended from the roses as a moth might have done, and the magic of it took hold of my heart forever. I persuaded my father, who was a little astonished at my insistence, to repeat the lines over and over again. At last my brain caught them, and as I walked in Benny's garden, or as I hung over the tidal pools at the edge of the sea, all my inner being used to ring out with the sound of

*Formosam resonare doces Amaryllida silvas.*¹⁶

This was the music that appealed to Robert Louis Stevenson, to whom, as his biographer informs us, Virgil was more "than any other poet, ancient or modern."¹⁷

Andrew Lang, primarily a Hellenist, speaks of "the music of Virgil's own unsurpassable style," a quality which Matthew Arnold has also generously recognized. Thus in his address as president of the Wordsworth Society, Arnold speaks of "the ineffable, the dissolving melancholy of those lovely lines":

*Optima quaeque dies miseris mortalibus aevi
prima fugit,*

written by the "sweetest" of all the "brilliant poets of Italy," "the one whom Wordsworth specially loved, the pious and tender Virgil."¹⁸ And again, when dealing with a comparison drawn by Joubert between Virgil and Racine, Arnold remarks:¹⁹

And indeed there is something *supreme* in an elegance which exercises such a fascination as Virgil's does; which makes one return to his poems again and again, long after one thinks one has done with them; which

¹⁶ Cf. Edmund Gosse, *Father and Son*⁴: New York, Scribner's Sons (1908), 179f.

¹⁷ Cf. Graham Balfour, *The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson*: London, C. Scribner's Sons (1901), II, 102.

¹⁸ Cf. William Knight, *Wordsworthiana*: London, Macmillan Co. (1889), 126f.

¹⁹ Cited from Dr. Nitchie (*op. cit.*) from Matthew Arnold's *Essay on Joubert*.

makes them one of those books that, to use Joubert's words, "lure the reader back to them, as the proverb says good wine lures back the wine-bibber." And the highest praise Joubert can at last find for Racine is this, that he is the Virgil of the ignorant.

An interesting story about Robert Browning is recorded by Joaquin Miller in a note on *Kit Carson's Ride*. The western poet had told Browning that he would like to borrow the measure and spirit of his "Good News" to describe a prairie fire on the plains. Browning, who probably had in mind Virgil's famous verse (*Aeneid* VIII, 596):

Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum,

replied: "Why not borrow from Virgil as I did? He is as rich as one of your gold mines, while I am but a poor scribe."

But of all our modern poets the one who is most in sympathy with the Mantuan is Tennyson, "the English Virgil," who, we are told, was fond of quoting single lines and whole passages from the Latin. "How he rolled out his Virgil, giving first the thunder, then the wash of the sea in the lines:

*Fluctus uti medio coepit cum albescere ponto,
longius ex altoque sinum trahit, utque volutus
ad terras immane sonat per saxa, neque ipso
monte minor procumbit; at ima exaestuat unda
verticibus nigramque alte subiectat harenam*²⁰

[*Georgics* III, 237-41].

"The nature of the Virgilian echoes," continues Dr. Nitchie (*op. cit.*, p. 232), "more than any others would indicate that Tennyson had absorbed and assimilated the Virgilian material, that he had lived with Virgil rather than studied him."

But it is unnecessary to enlarge upon a subject about which so much has been written by Professor Wilfred P. Mustard and others. Let me merely cite the concluding words of Canon Rawnsley's chapter (*op. cit.*, p. 218) on "Virgil and Tennyson," in which we find an admirable summary of notable stylistic similarities between the two poets:

²⁰ Cf. Henry Graham Dakyns, *Tennyson and His Friends*, cited by Dr. Nitchie. Cf. also *Memoir* II, 12.

Nothing has been said of skill in composition; of artistic beauty of phrase; of finished excellence of workmanship; of refinement of polish; nothing of marvellous melody of rhythm; of the use of onomatopoeia; of the supreme fitness of epithets; of the splendour of words and elevation of style; nothing of the numerous *feliciter dicta* and dramatic touches — points in which each of these great poets has shown himself a master; each has been without a rival in his own generation.

No wonder that, in his magnificent ode, the Laureate should pay such affectionate homage to so great a master:

I salute thee, Mantuvano, I who loved thee since my day began,
Wielder of the stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man.

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